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A Restoration of Confidence *The Editors*

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Politics and the Arts — December 20 & 27, 1969, 40 cents

The Myth of War Profiteering

George E. Berkley

Mylai "Incident" —*Zalin B. Grant*

The Army & Your Health —*Peter Barnes*

News From Toyland —*Stanford N. Sesser*

Social Scientists —*Reed Whittemore*

Down in Dixie —*John Osborne*

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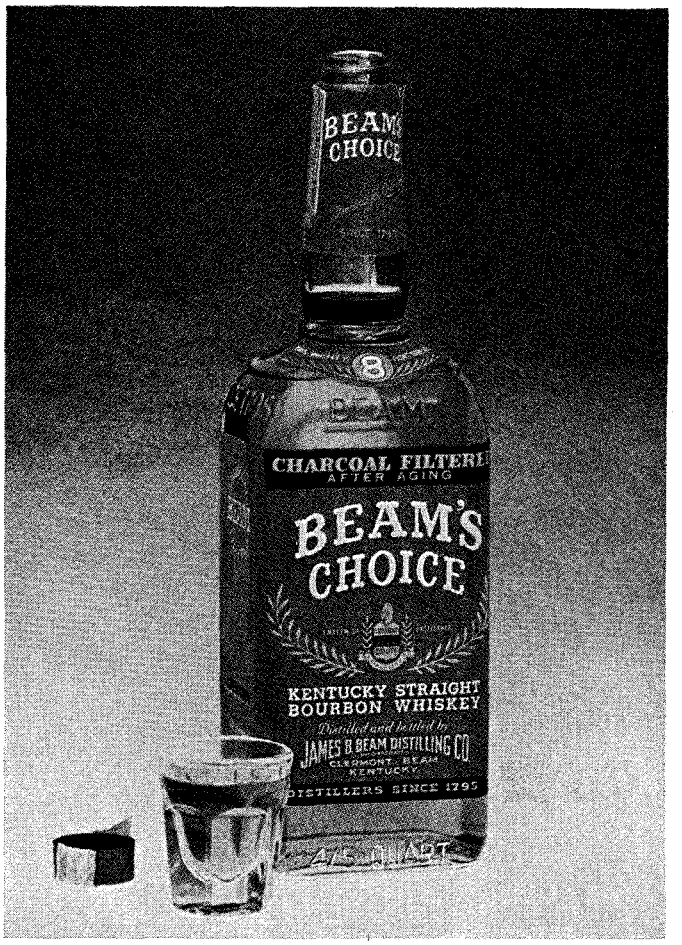

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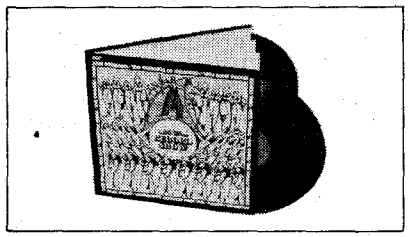


THE 1969 WARNER/REPRISE RECORD SHOW

Two records. Four sides. The very best of what these artists are currently and *will be offering* on Warner/Reprise (which means that a lot of the stuff on the album is, as of this writing, still unreleased — over a dozen tracks from upcoming Warner/Reprise albums).

Under normal conditions, this two-album set would sell for $9.96.

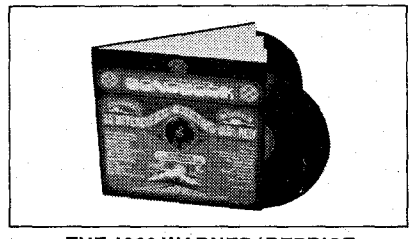
But the artists in our *Record Show* are not normal artists. They want their new recordings heard. Widely. And to get that done, they are willing to give up all their royalties on this album. (Just as long as Warner/Reprise doesn't make anything either.)

So here's the deal: *The 1969 Warner/Reprise Record Show* will only be sold by mail (no middle man). Warner/Reprise tosses in deluxe packaging. And you, the record buyer (who we fervently hope will be encouraged to pick up more of what you hear at regular retail prices) can get a copy of *Record Show* for the *below cost price* of

TWO BUCKS

Actually, this is a promotion in which everybody wins. You get an extensive taste of new Hendrix, new Pentangle, new Jethro Tull, new Van Dyke Parks, new Randy Newman, etc. The artists on *Record Show*, and subsequently Warner/Reprise, win some new friends.

We know this is how it works because earlier this year we offered—a bit hesitantly—the first of these revolutionary albums. It was called



THE 1969 WARNER/REPRISE SONGBOOK

This was also a two dollar, two record set, with over 40 songs by 26 important artists (including the first U.S. release of Jimi Hendrix' "Red House," which subsequently turned up over the summer in his best-selling *Smash Hits* album).

Songbook began as just a nice thing to do for our friends. But the people who got ahold of it wrote in to tell us differently:

Really liked the records. Have since purchased The Pentangle's *Sweet Child* and The Everly Brothers' *Roots*. Kindly send me five order forms for friends. I hope you people do well. You seem fairly straight.

J.C.I.
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

That was for *Songbook*. The *Record Show* is even finer, deluxer, and more provocative.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Frankly, we don't plan on selling more than a couple of thousand copies of *Record Show*. Mostly because this offer sounds too good to be true. And we know that naturally suspicious people will probably pass this ad by.

Which is really a shame.

Because if you *do* mail in your $2 (or $4 if you also want a copy of the earlier and all-different *Songbook* set), you'll soon have a collector's item on your phonograph. (That concept we toss in for you prestige-lovers.)

Each copy of *Record Show* has bound into it a few pages of pictures and background about the artists on the album. This way you'll learn the story behind such nifties as

- JONI MITCHELL'S Carnegie Hall debut (and hear some of it on *Record Show*).
- VAN DYKE PARKS' extraordinary Moog synthesizer commercials for the 1970 Ice Capades (also on *Record Show*).
- Tracks from as yet unreleased albums by FRANK ZAPPA, LORRAINE ELLISON, THE KINKS . . .

We could, you realize, go on and on . . .

MONEY BACK GUARANTEE

The 28 artists in *Record Show* are convinced you'll find their double album more than you expected. We are, too. To try to get on your good side and, possibly, move more than two thousand albums, we hereby offer you this (unnecessary) guarantee: If you don't find *Record Show* worth every penny, return the album to us within 10 days and we'll send you back your two bucks.

Via air mail.

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TRB®

from Washington

Ticket to a Sinking

You can guess the President's plans sometimes outside the White House. If a couple of firetrucks wait in the rear, he will be taking off soon in his helicopter. If a TV truck is parked to the left of the portico of the floodlit Mansion, he's holding a press conference. As you show your pass you note the noble loveliness of the edifice behind the black, leafless trees. "Gentlemen, the President of the United States," says the attendant, and all the gilt ballroom chairs scrape, and George and Martha Washington look down, and the crystals of the three immense chandeliers twinkle in kleig lights.

This is the eighth press conference in 11 months, the fewest of any President in modern times. (FDR had two-a-week in peacetime.) You speculate on the President, the nation and the era. Fifty million people are watching on TV; it's amazing. He has no notes; he stands alone. He is poised and confident. Call it glib if you want but would you like to stand there batting back answers to quick questions? His best defense is that there's no follow-up; he turns to the next questioner quickly. He makes a couple of boo-boos – Marines have built the Vietnamese "250,000" pagodas (about one to 50 people); it is corrected to 25,000 next day. His figure that 35-37 percent of gross national product now goes to taxes is wrong, economists say; it's around 30 percent – a difference of maybe $50 billion in a trillion dollar economy. But so what? It's a remarkable performance. He keeps his cool throughout. Yes, even when asked about Martha Mitchell, the talkative wife of the Attorney General.

She has burst upon the national scene as suddenly as Mr. Agnew, and is giving insights into her austere husband's presumed thinking en route. It was she who, over TV, coined the phrase, "liberal Communists" against the antiwar demonstrators. The *Washington Daily News*, Dec. 6, broke the story that she had undertaken personal telephone lobbying pressure for Judge Haynsworth on senators' wives. They were hopping mad, according to an amplified account by another reporter, Isabelle Shelton, next day. Vote for Haynsworth she threatened, according to one angry senator's wife, or she would "go on national television and defeat him." Her words were "strong and colorful," according to the assistant of Sen. Gore (D) of Tenn.; the wife of one of the senators used sharper language.

Mr. Nixon shrugged off the incident wryly in a comment that will win the sympathy of many husbands, but he started trains of thought about the Administration as he went on. Mr. Mitchell, in Mary McGrory's phrase, was the "architect of disaster" in the Haynsworth nomination campaign which showed a striking insensitivity to senatorial ritual; the three top Republican leaders all voted against Haynsworth. The objective Associated Press (Dec. 10) begins a piece: "President Nixon's troubles with Congress are being compounded by his failure to win support from key members of the congressional Republican leadership." Proposals mentioned: Haynsworth, civil rights, antipoverty legislation and a key provision of tax reform.

Where is the locus of Republican uneasiness? In *Fortune* (no liberal Communist sheet, that) James Reichley explores the Administration's plan to capture the South, most exhaustively set forth in *The Emerging Republican Majority* by Kevin P. Phillips, 29, special assistant to Mitchell. The bonds that would hold this new alliance together, Reichley says, would be 1) dislike elsewhere for the populous Northeast, and 2) "fear of urban blacks."

The President has publicly taken issue with the idea, Reichley notes, but with Phillips retaining "his position at the Attorney General's side . . . it seems permissible to question whether the Administration leaders truthfully reject his theory (which Republican Senator William Saxbe of Ohio calls 'a ticket on the *Titanic*'), or merely are chagrined that he has spelled it out with such candid cynicism." Hasn't Phillips really done for Mr. Nixon "the same dubious service that Machiavelli performed for Cesare Borgia – describing in naked words what his hero had all along been doing by instinct"? Indeed, a lot of moderate Republicans worry about this ticket on the *Titanic*.

The press conference zooms on. As many as 20 reporters jump up at once, trying to catch the President's eye. Now he is talking about taxes; threatening to veto the Senate's Christmas Tree tax bill. The mind goes back; how did this business of inflation start, anyway?

War and Taxes

It started, we believe, because the United States was willing to fight the Vietnam war, but not pay for it. The crucial year was 1965; it was then that the four-year boom needed a tax increase to cool it down. But the official theory of Vietnam was that it wouldn't cost much, and would be over by Christmas. Mr. Johnson didn't want to ask for taxes and he was virtually certain Congress wouldn't give them, or the public accept them. Economists pleaded in vain; LBJ waited more than a year, Congress another year after that. The taxes were too small and came too late. Vietnam cost $30 billion a year. Inflation took over.

The nation has made generous sacrifices for other wars: restrictions, controls, higher taxes; not this one. The country was willing to fight it; not pay for it. It ducked the burden in two disastrous ways – inflationary IOUs (i.e., went in debt) to raise cash, and postponed upkeep on physical plant and human values. It's like owning a home: you can always "save" money by not puttying windows, fixing drains, painting walls. Social structure is like that, too, we have been "saving" billions by not meeting the frightful depreciation costs of big cities, or the human costs of poverty. If it's a home it decays; if it's a country it decays, too, as class and racial tensions increase.

Some of these "Social IOUs" of Vietnam are already coming due. This is the worst of all possible times to cut taxes, but Congress is bent on it, mostly for the rich and middle incomes. If the unpatriotic ghetto rebels, well, there's always repression.

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A Restoration Of Confidence

The final question put to the President at his latest press conference was this: "Your Administration has been charged with the failure to reach the young people – both those who protest and march and those who don't. Have you any specific plans for reaching the young people of this country?" The President did not, and did not seem to feel he needed one. Unfortunately, the question was poorly phrased. There has been no failure of communication, but of policy. "Those who protest and march" are not consumers, who for reasons of obstinacy, obtuseness or indifference, are boycotting a merchandiser – in this case, the President – whose policy more clever advertising could sell. The unpersuaded simply don't like the product and don't believe Mr. Nixon's claims for it. They don't believe that the NLF's peace proposals are "quite frivolous," or that "virtually all" of the 1,200,000 Americans who have been in Vietnam "have helped the people of Vietnam in one way or another"; or that the President sincerely thinks "the people of the US are entitled to know everything that they possibly can with regard to any involvement of the US abroad." How can they believe that? Time and again, the people have not known, because they have not been told. The most recent examples are the still-concealed extent of US bombing of Laos, and the still-to-be-revealed amount of US payments to Thailand and South Korea for their collaboration in Vietnam.

To dismiss "those who protest and march" as a minority, and a not quite respectable minority, is to miss their significance. Nose counting is not the ultimate in political wisdom; it is a very primitive measure of the quality of what is being said, and of the social impact this particular minority has now and will have in the years ahead.

The press conference question should have been phrased thus: Why has confidence in authority, especially among the young, broken down, and how might it be repaired? It has broken down for reasons unrelated to the arts and techniques of communications, which are the most sophisticated in history. Part of the answer lies in the dissidents' scorn for the anonymity of bureaucracy, of systematization. Many of the young see society as an anthill, and they don't want to live like ants. If they mock the affluent society, it is because its affluence (and its freedoms) are not equitably shared, and because this on-the-make consumer civilization overvalues things and under-

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values people. In sum, confidence has broken down because traditional values have *not* broken down. They are being taken seriously. And because they are, authority is being held to account for its fourth of July commitments to personal dignity, fair play, freedom of speech and assembly, equal opportunity for all manner and race of men. Authority, as represented by this Administration, might have been spared some of youth's anger and skepticism had its oratory been less laudatory of the American Dream. "Those who protest and march and those who don't" cannot comprehend how the hungry can be fed, cities made livable, rivers and air purified, the uneducated properly schooled – so long as the President and Congress commit most of our national budget to the military.

Most of all, confidence in authority has broken down because of Vietnam. Our obsession with "fighting Communism" had led us to this abhorrent war, which authority repeatedly justified against every prudential and compassionate counsel. Of all the sources of disaffection, Vietnam must be put first. Our experience there has brought home to us that we too, as Senator Fulbright said last week, "are susceptible to the same virus of brutalization that other societies have come to, and nothing contributes more to the moral breakdown of a society than the long continuation of an unjust and unnecessary war."

Mr. Nixon has never seen to the bottom of the case against the war – that it is unjustified. "For whatever their reasons – conviction, pride or dogmatic anti-Communism – our policy makers," Senator Fulbright points out, "have never been willing to recognize the Vietnamese conflict for that which virtually every expert and seasoned observer has long recognized it to be: a civil conflict in which Communism is and always has been secondary to the drive for national independence." Until they do, policy will not change. It is by now clear that Mr. Nixon is not determined to end the war through negotiations (for the prerequisite to that is a government in Saigon with which the NLF and Hanoi *can* deal), but is bent on prosecution of the war on the cheap. His real strategy, Walter Lippmann writes in *Newsweek*, "is to appease American dissent by removing many of the burdens of the war – by amending the draft so that primarily 19-year-olds are vulnerable, by changing the tactics of the battlefield to reduce the casualties, by withdrawing most of the combat infantry. The theory of the strategy is that a long occupation, using some 200,000 support troops and the artillery and the Air Force, can be made acceptable to the American people. The official strategy is addressed not to negotiating with our adversaries, but to placating American opinion." This is the strategy the President and Secretary Laird call Vietnamization; that is, a proxy war. So it is that Mr. Nixon can reply as follows to a question concerning our subsidies to the Thais for their collaboration in Vietnam – "I would much rather pay out some money to have them [the Thais] there than to have American men fighting there in their place."

That ephemeral "silent majority" may be temporarily placated (the marchers will not) by such strategy. But even that majority will wise up to what is being done. A Saigon government that has to be carried by foreigners will never command support from its own people. No sensible person, moreover, will long believe that fewer troops can win a victory that more troops could not. American support of "Vietnamization" will not keep a puppet government in Saigon propped up for very long, and as its hold on power weakens, that ruling group will be driven to harsher repression. Speaking last week of three "neutralist" legislators, President Thieu, according to *Reuters*, said that if they were not impeached, "the people and the armed forces will cut off these deputies' heads. Our duty is to beat such dogs to death."

"Those who protest and march" are asking basic, unanswered questions: why are we fighting; how did we get so deeply into it; why don't we clear out; what and how much difference would it make to the Vietnamese – or the US – were the Vietcong to take power in the South; what makes Hanoi the "enemy"? The official response to such questions by this Administration and the preceding one, has been a flood of what Mr. Fulbright calls "prideful nonsense about 'defeat' and 'humiliation.'"

A restoration of confidence in government, in authority, is incompatible with such cant and deception. Confidence would begin to revive, however, the day the President or a majority of members of the Congress admitted this country has taken a wrong turning. "Liquidation of a mistake is neither a defeat nor a humiliation," Fulbright reminds us; "it is a rational and mature way of accommodating to reality, and the ability to do it is something to be proud of. . . . When [a war's] political purposes are recognized as unworthy, as they have been in Vietnam, it is rank immorality to press on for a costly, destructive and probably unattainable victory."

The point is not that confession is good for our souls, but that the integrity, and indeed the cohesiveness, of the United States demands it. For two decades, we have had drilled into our heads that anything done in the name of anti-Communism is right and necessary. That lie must be laid. In doing so, we take the first step toward "tearing away the debris of Cold War dogmas and resolutions that stultify our policies," called for last week by Senator Charles Mathias. The truth must be spoken, aloud, not only for the sake of reconciliation at home, or of peace in Vietnam, but because its utterance would lift the hearts of America's most valued friends everywhere. Only then might that discredited claim – American world leadership – again carry conviction.

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"Snob Zoning"

With little fanfare, the NAACP and the State of Massachusetts are moving down separate but similar paths to end the legal right of affluent suburban communities to preserve themselves as wealthy, white commuter bastions. At issue are the so-called "snob zoning" provisions of local home-rule statutes. Under these laws local town fathers can insure their community's insularity by laying out a grid of large-lot, single-family plots on all available land. The restrictions keep the poor bottled up in the cities, while the jobs move out to the closed-off suburbs.

New job openings in the New York City metropolitan area between 1952 and 1966, for example, ran 7-1 in favor of the suburbs over the central city, according to NAACP figures. In San Francisco, the job rate had increased by 25,000 in town and 202,000 in the suburbs. The Suburban Action Institute, a nonprofit research and planning firm from White Plains, N. Y., which compiled the NAACP figures, points out that 99 percent of the vacant land in our 20 largest urban areas lies outside of the core cities. The Institute concluded that something must be done in the suburbs to ventilate the overcrowded urban slums and give poor blacks and whites a chance to get available jobs.

What the NAACP housing officials decided to do was hit the suburbs head-on. NAACP housing director William R. Morris turned up at a board meeting in Oyster Bay, a sprawling conglomerate of wealthy and not-so-wealthy neighborhoods just 30 miles from Bedford-Stuyvesant by Long Island Expressway. Not only does Oyster Bay contain about 3000 acres of vacant residential land, it has the Grumman Aerospace Corp. with 30,000 jobs. Morris told the town's five startled councilmen that unless they were ready to rezone half of their available residential land for smaller plots than the present one- and two-acre zoning, and accept low density garden apartments to provide for a massive influx of low- and moderate-income workers earning less than $15,000 a year, he would see them in court.

"What we're seeking to do," Morris explained after the meeting, "is to create a land bank for the development of housing in the suburbs that have been closed to poor black and white persons all across the country." Other areas being eyed by NAACP scouts: wealthy Fairfield and Westchester counties to the north of New York City, DuPage County north of Chicago and suburbs around Indianapolis. In the process, said Morris, the NAACP is prepared to launch a major constitutional court challenge against the whole concept of restrictive suburban zoning, as being in violation of the 14th Amendment.

Massachusetts home rule advocates received their first setback November 21 when a hotly contested law went into effect which will force affluent suburbs to set aside a portion of their zoned land for federal low- and middle-income housing. The law, the first of its kind in the country, took four roll calls in the state legislature before it passed 122 to 98. It gives local communities the right to set health and safety provisions, thus allowing them a measure of control over proposed housing. No community will be required to give up more than three-tenths of one percent of its residentially zoned land in any one year; only a small percentage of the land now zoned for large lot development will be affected.

The bill was pushed through the state legislature by an unusual coalition of suburban liberals and urban conservatives. The latter "voted because they're glad to see the poor go," a statehouse observer said. Boston has had a sharp surge of suburban jobs, notably along the new highways 128 and 495 which ring the outskirts of the city. But the jobs they offer, as can be seen in page after page of ads in the Sunday edition of the Boston *Globe*, are for positions such as electronics experts.

Morris, however, retains his optimism that downing snob zoning will help break up the impacted ghettoes: "In most areas where these industrial strips are going up, there is a constant demand for the unskilled alongside the skilled workers. Up to 10 percent of those jobs are going to have to be for maintenance workers and this is what we're counting on."

The Nixon Watch

Down in Dixie

New Orleans

It was nice to hear more than 900 Southern Republicans telling each other at the end of the party's regional conference here that they'd had a real fine time. They had indeed, one reason being that for all of their recent gains, Republicans in the South still have a sense of loneliness, a feeling that there is something wrong about not still being the Democrats that most of them were before they turned away from what they call, with the undying bitterness of the betrayed, "the national Democrat Party." Just being together, proving to each other that so many were prepared to pay their way to New Orleans from the 13 states represented at this last of four regional Republican conferences, and knowing that the attendance at their conference was better than double that at any of the others, was a source of comfort and pride. Clarke Reed, the party's Mississippi and regional chairman,

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said at an opening press session that "I don't see how any libertarian or liberal can deny that what the South needs is a two-party system," and there was no denying the evidence here that the South is closer than it has been in a century to meeting the need.

There was, however, a plentitude of denial that the Nixon Administration and the Nixon leadership of the Republican Party are helping to meet the need with "a Southern strategy." Reed, Harry Dent from the White House, Chairman Rogers Morton of the GOP national committee, and every other dignitary on the scene brought the subject up without being asked about it. They argued with striking fervor and consistency that the "alleged strategy" is actually "a national strategy" that happens to appeal to the South a little more than it appeals to other sections. The only speaker who offered a variation on this theme was Vice President Agnew, who was hailed with stickers reading: SPIRO IS MY HERO. They greeted Agnew with ecstatic applause when he said:

"After giving it a lot of thought, I finally came to the conclusion that it's useless to deny that there is a Southern strategy (*Applause*). But it's not the strategy of the Republican Party. The Southern strategy is the brain-child of the liberal wing of the Democratic Party (*Applause*). The strategy isn't really very complex. It's simply to criticize, and ridicule, and vilify the people of the South and curry political favor with the powerful, radically led, liberal groups of the great industrial cities which are presently (*sic*) in the North and the Midwest. So there's your Southern strategy (*Applause*). And because the people of the South have seen through this transparent demagoguery, they are turning in droves to the Republican Party."

Apart from this unwitting confession and from a couple of cracks at Democratic Senator Albert Gore of Tennessee for sponsoring, and the Senate majority for approving, a hike in personal income tax exemptions and thereby practicing "demagoguery" and "fiscal irresponsibility," the Agnew performance was in marked contrast to his previous display at New Orleans on October 19 and to his subsequent pyrotechnics. Here, this time, there were no jibes at "impudent snobs" and youthful "rotten apples," no attacks on television and other news media. The Vice President presented instead the appearance of a handsome, contained, and thoroughly complacent robot, an effect that may have been due in part to the fact that two-thirds of his speech was a word-for-word repetition of one he had delivered in Washington the preceding Monday. It occurred later to some of the conferees that their hero had given them very little to cheer except himself. But that, quite evidently, was enough at the time for them and for him. All of the many references by other speakers to Spiro Agnew drew noticeably more applause than references to Richard Nixon did. When he was asked whether he saw any chance that Nixon might pick another running mate in 1972, Clarke Reed of Mississippi answered with the utmost assurance and contentment that, "If ever there was a Vice President locked in, it's Vice President Agnew."

"There is very little work going on here, frankly," Reed also said. Very little was, but at plenary and "workshop" sessions the delegates showed themselves in revealing detail. Most of them, male and female, were white, well off, middle-aged and older, along with a sprinkling of college squares. The very few Negroes were a pathetic lot, tolerated by the white delegates and, according to reliable report, representative of black constituencies so small as to be practically nonexistent. They did, however, embarrass Harry Dent and state chairmen "Bo" Callaway of Georgia and Duke Crittenden of Alabama with complaints that neither this conference nor the Republican Party was doing anything effective to halt the flight of blacks to the Democratic Party. A white delegate from rural Louisiana embarrassed the platform moguls even more by complaining that those among them who tried to answer the blacks tended to "stutter and fall through the floor." Callaway, who was presiding, summoned to his aid none other than Governor Claude Kirk of Florida, who bellowed that he, in person, had visited scores of black schools and black ghettos and what more could the Negroes want? The white mayor of a Louisiana town told how he had promised a black bartender at his country club, who wanted a job as census enumerator, that "if you go down and change your registration from Democrat to Republican, I'll do everything I can to help you." Duke Crittenden averred in similar vein that the Nixon Administration was doing everything in its power to help the black man but did expect "some response from the black community" in the way of votes for Republicans. When a delegate from his home state, South Carolina, asked Harry Dent whether the Administration supported or opposed a pending congressional amendment that would legalize the kind of "free choice" school integration rejected by the Supreme Court, Dent sadly replied that HEW Secretary Finch had opposed the amendment, then added with commendable firmness that the Nixon Administration was pledged to "enforce the law" and would do so. The delegates were allowed to go on supposing, as they audibly did, that the Administration would continue to enforce integration with maximum feasible consideration for the feelings of the white South.

Postmaster General Winton Blount of Alabama, the only Southerner in the Nixon Cabinet and the only Cabinet member who graced the occasion, took a lot of floor fire from delegates who resented his plan to place postmasterships on a merit basis. A Texas county chairman asked him when the Nixon Administration was going to come to its senses and realize that "there is no substitute for patronage." He was also asked,

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with equal bitterness, why the department was not more zealous in shifting its local deposits from banks controlled by Democrats to banks controlled by Republicans. "We all know," a delegate told him, "that these deposits pay off in campaign contributions, tickets to fund-raising dinners, and so forth." Blount held out some hope in the matter of bank deposits, but manfully avowed a determination to run the postal system "on a nonpartisan basis." Many delegates privately put it to Dent and other White House and national committee operatives that it was high time to apply that famous "Southern strategy" in the shape of more federal jobs for Southerners and less prating about Nixon's national programs.

Next to Agnew, the conference idol was Clement Haynsworth, the South Carolina judge who had been denied Senate confirmation for the Supreme Court. He was present only in spirit, but his case was a source of some dissatisfaction among delegates who supposed that President Nixon could and should have kept his senior Senate leaders, Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania and Robert Griffin of Michigan, from voting against Haynsworth. Nixon himself got enormous credit for backing his nominee to the last, and "Bo" Callaway elicited tremendous cheers when he promised to inform Judge Haynsworth "that he has received a rising ovation of confidence from this group."

The party leadership's hopes of picking up perhaps three Senate and eight to ten House seats from the South next year turn upon the foundation hope that Nixon's popularity with white Southerners will continue as high as it clearly is now. Why is it so high (86 percent, according to a CBS poll quoted to the conference by Agnew and Dent)? Drake Edens, South Carolina's quiet and impressive national committeeman, gave as good an answer as any when he said, "We just feel that he wants to do what the people in our state want him to do."

John Osborne

Mylai Was Not an "Isolated Incident"

It's That Kind of War

by Zalin B. Grant

The number of noncombatant casualties resulting from combat air and ground operations is a matter of concern. These casualties have an adverse effect on the rural reconstruction effort and the attainment of the GVN national goals. . . . I have every confidence in the discretion and judgment of our personnel, however, I feel this problem is worthy of increased command emphasis. It is imperative that all our officers and men understand the importance of minimizing noncombatant casualties whenever possible.

– General William C. Westmoreland,
Directive to all Subordinate Commanders,
July 7, 1965.

Most US officers arrived in Vietnam stamped with the notion that since war was indisputably hell, innocent civilians would be killed. It was simply a question of how many. But war's hell, like Dante's Inferno, had descending circles of terror. And America, with its fantastic array of killing tools, determined how hot hell became for "noncombatants." Not long after he issued the civilian casualty directive, Westmoreland approved the use in South Vietnam of the most formidable anti-personnel weapon ever devised – a cluster bomb that combined the horrors of white phosphorus, napalm and fragmentation.

More than a half decade before Lieutenant William Calley, Jr., choppered to Mylai, US army advisers grappled with the problem of fighting a war in which the enemy was so indistinguishable from the innocent that it was often hard to avoid killing both. Their solution was to rely totally on South Vietnamese government and military officials to finger the enemy. With the okay of the South Vietnamese, huge chunks of South Vietnam territory were designated as free fire zones on US military maps. American planes and artillery were given carte blanche to bomb and kill everything that moved in these "enemy" zones, which often included populous areas.

Thus, two deadly precedents of the war were established. First, the US military defined the enemy in terms of geographical territory, rather than in terms of insurgents interspersed in a largely uncommitted population. All persons and animals in enemy zones were considered to be Vietcong guerrillas, low-level VC

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cadre, or at least Communist sympathizers. US helicopters fired randomly in these areas. By stitching a few bullets through a suspect village or hamlet, the American helicopters hoped to draw return fire which would "fix" the enemy's position. Often the random fire hit people, buffalo, houses. When US-advised ARVN forces attacked hamlets in enemy areas, all civilians killed during the battle were automatically classed as Vietcong. Dead women and children were used to inflate body counts reported by government troops. Later, American units did likewise.

Secondly, the US fell into a pattern of complacent reliance on South Vietnamese officials, usually province chiefs, to determine which villages could be attacked by American firepower. When the Mylai massacre is thoroughly probed, someone probably will plead in extenuation that the South Vietnamese province chief had cleared Mylai as a free fire zone. Unlikely to be mentioned is the fact that shortly after the incident occurred, President Nguyen Van Thieu took the first steps to fire most of South Vietnam's 44 province chiefs for corruption and incompetence. Almost all of these men, who very roughly corresponded to state governors, were inept political payoffs from Saigon. They seldom were familiar with the villages in the provinces they supposedly governed.

Yet the province chiefs were the key factor in the US system of control to minimize noncombatant casualties. The province chief was the usual level from which US airstrikes were programmed for populated areas. He radioed the request to corps headquarters, where a joint Vietnamese-US Air Force Support Center routinely cleared and scheduled the airstrike. (Province chiefs reportedly have extorted money from villages by threatening to call an airstrike on the area.) Or if a US spotter plane drew a few rounds of sniper fire from a village, the pilot asked for permission from the province chief's headquarters before he guided American bombers in to destroy the village. Needless to say, clearance was seldom denied. US ground operations in populated areas later were cleared the same way. For instance, before Americans burned villages in Binh Dinh province, they requested and received permission from the province chief, who almost never ventured from the safety of the province capital.

The defoliation program was similarly organized. "Say we spot some rice growing in an area we haven't noticed before," an American air force major, a crop-poisoner, once explained to me. "We check with the Vietnamese province chief and if he says none of his people live in the area, the paddy becomes a target for defoliation." By early 1966, American spray planes were poisoning ten thousand acres of rice and other food crops a month.

Other brutal practices were frozen into the US military mentality early in the war. We tacitly, if perhaps reluctantly, condoned the South Vietnamese method of prisoner interrogation, torture, which was frequently applied to civilians in enemy-controlled areas. Former South Vietnamese General Nguyen Chanh Thi, a legendary innovator, reputedly developed the famous helicopter interrogation method. Prisoners were taken aloft and tossed one-by-one from a helicopter, unless they agreed to talk.

So a half-decade old heritage of disregard for the lives of civilians in Vietcong-influenced areas greeted newly arrived GIs when the American buildup began in mid-1965. The military insensitivity that had prevailed before the buildup was now magnified several hundred times. More free fire zones were established; more US helicopters roved over South Vietnamese villages randomly firing to "fix" the enemy. "It was cleared through proper channels"– meaning the South Vietnamese province chief okayed the action – became the self-righteous American excuse when journalists documented the bombing and burning of villages.

The ugly American tactics were first dramatically exposed in a televised account of US Marines burning the village of Camne in August, 1965. The atrocity prompted a short-lived public outcry. The Marines responded to the criticism by importing a new public affairs officer to polish their image. They didn't stop burning villages, though. Neither did other US units; destruction of villages became fairly routine and was seldom reported.

The crucial time to formulate and enforce strict military policies to prevent civilian casualties came – and passed – in late 1965. American public attention was focused on the controversy. General Westmoreland made further moves to minimize noncombatant deaths. He specified that air and artillery pre-strikes on helicopter landing zones and random helicopter fire were tactics to be avoided. He banned undirected artillery fire, known as H and I (harassment and interdiction), in certain areas. But as fresh US units arrived the guidelines either were misplaced, rescinded or disobeyed, and every night thousands of American artillery rounds randomly rained on the countryside.

Intra-military debate on killing women and children assumed a tone of scholasticism. Some officers argued that civilian casualties didn't cause antigovernment reactions serious enough to hamper the war effort. They quoted surveys to support this contention. Others debated more specific points: should a village in which retreating VC are known to have sought refuge amongst civilians be bombed, even though the Vietcong have ceased firing? Should a village near a landing zone be strafed for fear it shelters guerrillas who will fire on helilifted troops? The answers were usually yes.

Then events decisively shifted attention away from the civilian casualty controversy. Conventional North Vietnamese and American forces clashed in unpopu-

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lated border areas of South Vietnam. No need to worry about killing innocent noncombatants in the remote central highlands. The issue was buried by the headlines of big battles. Moreover, the US command was overwhelmed with the less morally taxing problems of supplying the rapid American buildup with enough food and ammunition.

There are many reasons why the US military wasn't compelled to seek an alternative to its brutal search and destroy tactics. The deficiency of war reporting, for example. Many journalists, though largely critical of the US performance, developed a this-doesn't-excuse-us-but-look-at-the-VC syndrome. Newspapers and magazines usually "balanced" their criticisms of American tactics with a description of Vietcong atrocities. The juxtaposition served to ameliorate US actions.

Domestic antiwar critics also failed to focus properly on the problem. Protest over the fate of civilians concentrated almost solely on the use of napalm. During the height of the napalm controversy, the US government dispatched respected experts to investigate charges that Americans were napalming women and children. The experts reported, probably accurately, that napalm burns among civilians were negligible. Many Americans construed this to mean that civilian casualties were negligible when, in fact, the more undramatic weapons of war – M79 grenades, machine guns, mortar and artillery shells – were killing thousands of civilians.

Indeed, so little pressure was applied to the military that no statistics were officially gathered on the number of civilian casualties until 1967. By then the military attitude on the unavoidability of such casualties had hardened hopelessly. When President Lyndon Johnson ordered the Pentagon in 1967 to build three US army hospitals solely for the treatment of wounded noncombatants, US military leaders refused to comply. They used various excuses, postponements and subterfuges until the idea was lost in the war's shuffle. The hospitals would have been, of course, open admission that the US was killing innocent people.

It would be grossly unfair to depict the majority of Americans in Vietnam as wanton, or even accidental, killers of Vietnamese civilians. Many were like Marine Colonel Michael Yunck, who refused to call an airstrike on an enemy village filled with women and children, instead took his helicopter low over the area to pinpoint VC positions. He got his leg shot off by a VC machine gun for his compassion.

Perhaps many of the ugly occurrences in Vietnam can be described as "aberrations of war" – the grenade tossed at civilians in a moment of panic, the village bombed because of mechanical failure. But for the past several years, an increasing number of so-called aberrations have appeared to be nothing more than premeditated brutality. AP photographer Dana Stone recounts the grim tale of US Marines who wanted to kill a wounded North Vietnamese they took after a harsh battle. An officer interceded and ordered the prisoner evacuated to a nearby American hospital. Several nights later, unknown persons slipped into the hospital and slit the wounded prisoner's throat.

Mylai can't be checked off as an aberation. Nor can it be dismissed, as it was by Mr. Nixon last week at his press conference, as "an isolated incident." Vietnam is a difficult, complex war. Yes. But disciplined US troops, no matter how tired, understrength or harassed they may have been, would not have coldbloodedly assembled and massacred women and children -- if they had been properly taught to value the Vietnamese peasant's life. As a soldier at Mylai later said: "You can't just blame Calley's platoon; you've got to blame everyone. It was a free fire zone. And you know, if you can shoot artillery and bombs in there every night, how can the people in there be worth so much?"

News From Toyland

by Stanford N. Sesser

There are going to be some quite unexpected surprises under the Christmas tree for thousands of unsuspecting children. Toys that heat and bake, talk and teach, rattle and whir are also going to burn, cut, maim, electrocute. Parents who assumed their children were protected by some sort of safety code will discover that safety depends solely on the good will of the manufacturer. Take the Empire Little Lady Oven ($9.95). This child's stove, which plugs in and cooks by heating coils just like mommy's stove, reaches a tem-

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perature of 200 degrees Fahrenheit on the sides, 300 degrees on top and 660 degrees inside the oven, according to tests by *Consumer Reports*. By contrast, most kitchen ranges won't get hotter than 180 degrees on the non-cooking surfaces. After a little search, the lucky parent might find a warning on the Little Lady Oven – underneath the stove, punched into the recessed metal bottom in hard-to-read letters: "Caution – contact with any part may cause burns."

Some parents might shy away from a child's stove but few are going to think twice about buying "New, Improved Baby's Delight," a 49 cent rattle that makes chime-like noises. The rattle, in pink and blue colors, pictures baby contentedly sucking his thumb. Peel away this paper picture and you have a cardboard cylinder enclosing the rattle mechanism. Peel or smash open the cardboard and you find underneath seven sharp and rusty exposed metal spikes fastened securely to the rattle's base. An estimated 350,000 of these chime rattles will be sold in the United States this year at Woolworth's and other stores. Surprisingly, the rattle really is "new and improved." On the previous model, the spikes could penetrate the outer covering simply by pushing the rattle against a wall.

Toys like this – and there are dozens of examples – aren't going to make parents who find out about them very happy with the degree of free enterprise allotted to the toy industry by Congress. This was sensed clearly in Washington a year ago after the National Commission on Product Safety held hearings on hazardous toys. The logical solution is of course a government agency that would test and clear toys in an operation similar to that of the Food and Drug Administration. The idea of the government protecting the consumer in that clear-cut a manner is apparently still too radical a concept however, and last spring Congress went to work on the next best thing: a bill proposed by the Product Safety Commission giving the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare broad powers to yank hazardous toys off the market.

Then the Toy Manufacturers of America Inc. spun into action. The position of the toy makers on the controversy was clearly stated in the Product Safety Commission hearings by Richard J. Manuell, child safety consultant for the National Safety Council, which claims to work with the industry in developing safe toys. Mr. Manuell declared that "a child has to experience some minor injuries, some minor experiences of trauma in order to learn." Aaron Locker, counsel for the Toy Manufacturers of America, told the commission, "I am almost tempted to remark that if we wanted to be completely safe, maybe we should stay in bed."

The Toy Manufacturers hired some powerful voices to weaken the proposed Congressional bill, and their lobbying paid off. Under the Product Safety Commission's proposals, the HEW Secretary could have banned from sale such items as toy stoves which present an inherent risk rather than a hazard-producing defect. Under the final bill, according to the Toy Manufacturers' Mr. Locker, the Secretary is powerless to act "if the toy is properly labeled and the alleged hazard is required by the function of the toy."

Consumers Union, the non-profit publisher of *Consumer Reports*, sums up what is wrong with the bill. "The great shortcoming of the act," says a CU spokesman, "is that products that maim, burn or cripple children can still find their way onto the market. A cynic might say that the manufacturer who isn't particularly concerned can carry out research on children instead of in his laboratory."

The Toy Manufacturers proudly shepherded their Child Protection and Toy Safety Act of 1969 to final passage. "We found there were no problems shown which necessitated enactment of the bill," says Mr. Locker. "But we welcomed legislation which formally prohibited hazards in toys. We recognized the wave of consumerism we're in."

The minimal amount of protection provided by the bill won't be felt this Christmas in any case. The measure, signed by President Nixon last month, doesn't take effect until January. Meanwhile, widely available toys include the following:

► Mirro Miniature Electric Corn Popper: Several thousand will be sold in the United States this year despite a finding in late 1968 by *Consumer Reports* that the toy poses a dangerous shock hazard. If the popper is cleaned with a sponge or a damp cloth, as it's supposed to be, the magazine's testers found that water could enter the unit and make it live. In addition, after 22 minutes the corn popper reached a temperature of 500 degrees inside, 350 degrees on the side and 190 degrees on the upper part of the handle.

Mirro Aluminum Co., the Wisconsin-based manufacturer, says the product was approved by Underwriters' Laboratories, an independent testing organization. The company also points out that the toy's instruction booklet warns: "Caution: do not leave a popper that is plugged in unattended. Overheating can result in a fire hazard. In cleaning, never immerse popper in water as this can damage heating unit."

"A child from 7 to 12 would have a lot of fun with this," says Frank Prescott, a Mirro vice president.

► Etch-a-Sketch: This is one of the most popular toys in the nation, with 20 million sold in the last decade. Made by Ohio Art Co., Bryan, Ohio, it consists of a glass sheet in an open box, with a layer of aluminum powder covering the underside of the glass. By turning two knobs, a child can move a stylus which scrapes away the powder and makes visible lines. Many parents who buy the toy assume the sheet is made of plastic. But they find out differently when a child trips and falls on Etch-a-Sketch. The

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Product Safety Commission has in its files eight complaints by parents whose children were cut by the glass, some severely. And a Minneapolis lawyer who did research on the toy charges that the gray powder leaves a permanent tatoo when it gets into the cuts.

► Rapco Metal Casting Set (Rapco Inc., Chicago): Basically a cooking stove designed to melt lead, which can then be poured into molds, it reaches the incredible temperatures of 800 degrees on the cooking surface and 600 degrees on the sides. Nowhere is this mentioned on the box or in the instruction booklet. The only warning is: "Be sure to wear gloves and handle figures with pliers or other tool."

Manufacturers seem to delight in playing games with their warnings. One widely sold toy stove, called "Magic Cool Oven" (Argo Industries Corp., New York), boasts in large letters on the package, "Outside Safe for Little Fingers to Touch." However, punched into the metal door of the oven is the warning: "Caution, contact with hands inside of oven or inside of cooling chamber may cause burns." Then, on the back of the stove, punched sideways into the copper-colored metal, is a further warning: "Remove plug before cleaning. Do not immerse in water. Clean with damp cloth only." The child who assumes the name "Magic Cool" means that the oven won't heat up is in trouble.

► Last year a product was widely advertised on television called "Super-Dough with Super-Glo" (Hassenfeld Bros. Inc., Providence, R.I.), a glob of plastic impregnated with a chemical that glows in the dark. The package illustrated little children with gobs of Super-Dough stuck to their foreheads, cheeks and chins. The instruction booklet warned, "Never, never put superdough into or over your eyes, ears, nose or mouth.

► Dangerous dolls: A walk through the doll department of any toy store will disclose any number of dolls with ribbons or bonnets attached to their hair with straight pins – pins that can easily be pulled out by a baby. If that doesn't pose enough of a hazard, sometimes the eyes of a doll or stuffed animal are attached to the end of a pin, which is then pushed into the head.

The US Public Health Service estimates that 700,000 children a year are injured in accidents involving toys. While toy executives vocally insist the number of injuries actually caused by hazardous toys is tiny and insignificant, the toy industry has steadfastly refused to compile accident figures. Nor will the toy industry say how much is spent on safety. A year ago the Product Safety Commission got a promise from the Toy Manufacturers' Mr. Locker that he would supply safety figures for the association's 300 members. Now Mr. Locker says, "We've been frankly unable to compile them."

In the face of this wall of silence on the safety issue, a parent wondering how to select safe toys has a real problem. A good start is to avoid anything that plugs in, breaks into sharp pieces, or has sharp edges. Dolls and stuffed animals have to literally be pulled apart on the shelves in a search for pins and spikes – the retailer won't do it himself. "We can't take every toy and break it apart," says Charles W. Veysey, president of FAO Schwarz. "We carry 12,000 different items. There are between 150,000 and 200,000 toys on the market to choose from. We have to rely on the manufacturer's integrity."

The Army May Be Hazardous to Your Health

by Peter Barnes

And the people of America are challenged, too, challenged to press for responsible news presentations . . . This is one case where the people must defend themselves; where the citizen, not the government, must be the reformer . . .

– Vice President Agnew
Des Moines, November 13, 1969

In his analysis of the electronic media before the Midwest Regional Republican Committee last month, Vice President Agnew steered clear of one little corner of broadcasting practice – the area of public service announcements. These are the free advertisements that radio and TV stations provide to such benevolent and non-controversial groups as the Boy Scouts, the National Safety Council, the United Fund and other friendly neighborhood organizations. It's all done to show the Federal Communications Commission how public-spirited its licensees really are, and how worthy of getting their licenses renewed. Had the Vice

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President turned his critical eye toward this little eddy in the public airwaves, he would undoubtedly have noticed that, like the fearsome news commentaries, some public service announcements are more noncontroversial than others. For example, he might have observed that, come springtime, there are quite a few announcements reminding citizens to pay their income tax by April 15, but no announcements urging citizens *not* to pay their income tax; or likewise, that audiences are occasionally encouraged to purchase US Savings Bonds, but never exhorted to boycott them.

Such observations might not have disturbed Agnew's own sense of fair play, but they did arouse the interest of a band of citizens in San Francisco who, inspired by the Vice President's remarks in Des Moines, have struck out in search of reform. The citizens are members of antiwar groups: San Francisco Women for Peace, the GI Association and the Resistance. They have observed that there is no shortage of public service announcements on radio and TV urging young men to enlist in one of the armed services, but never any advertisements urging men *not* to join the military. This is a most unsatisfactory imbalance, and the reform-minded citizens are seeking to correct it.

I don't know exactly how much money the Pentagon spends producing recruitment ads for the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps, but it is undoubtedly a sizeable sum. Hundreds of stations throughout the country receive periodically from the armed forces an assortment of film clips, recorded spots and reading copy. The trend lately is toward "groovy" ads that appeal to today's turned-on youth, though the traditionally solid "take-it-from-me" endorsements are still widely used (plugging the Marine Corps these days, for example, are Ed McMahon, Jonathan Winters, Jack Webb and Art Buchwald). In the small and medium-sized cities, where stations carry many more recruitment ads than in the large metropolitan areas, local recruiters often go down to stations and broadcast their own personal appeals.

To rectify the preponderance of military announcements on the airwaves, the San Francisco peace groups have prepared a series of *anti*-recruitment ads ("See your draft counselor, not your recruiter"), and have requested Northern California stations to broadcast them. The basis for their request is interesting, and apparently sound: it rests on the fairness doctrine of the FCC, and the manner in which that doctrine was applied to cigarette advertisements.

Back in 1967, a young lawyer named John F. Banzhaf III complained to the FCC that WCBS-TV in New York City was carrying lots of cigarette commercials, but little in the way of announcements indicating that smoking might be hazardous to one's health. In a landmark ruling on June 5, 1967, the FCC upheld Mr. Banzhaf's complaint, declaring that " the fairness doctrine is applicable to such advertisements," and that any station that presents such advertisements "has the duty of informing its audience of the other side of this controversial issue of public importance." In the two years since that decision, anti-smoking ads sponsored by the American Cancer Society and others have been so effective that the tobacco companies have decided to eliminate all broadcast commercials (and thereby the broadcaster's obligation to run anti-smoking ads) as of next year.

The San Francisco antiwar groups are following this precedent. In his letter to the radio and TV stations, attorney Donald A. Jelinek, who represents the Agnew-inspired citizens, contends that military service today "is a controversial issue of public importance – far more controversial and far more important than the issue of whether an individual ought to smoke cigarettes."

The recruitment advertisements, says Jelinek, "argue that participation in the armed forces is beneficial to the individual and to society at large. They suggest that participation in the military is moral, manly, socially acceptable and desirable, and, because of the Selective Service laws, obligatory for young men. It is never indicated in any of the recruitment advertisements . . . that an individual's participation in the armed services could lead to his involvement in the Vietnam war, that such participation could endanger his physical and mental well-being, that it could compromise his moral principles, or that it could be contrary to the national interest. Nor is it indicated in any of the recruitment advertisements that many deferments to military service are available under present laws and regulations."

In short, the other side of a highly controversial issue is not being presented in the public service announcements of most radio and TV stations – and under the fairness doctrine, it ought to be. If the stations around San Francisco do not respond favorably, the antiwar groups plan to complain to Dean Burch's FCC; then, if necessary, to the federal courts. The mind boggles at the impact that could be made by some powerful anti-recruitment ads (a few seconds of Pinkville?) and at the possibilities that could open up for public service announcements in other controversial areas.

COMING: Ralph Nader reports on new investigative work that is being done by students

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The Myth of War Profiteering

by George E. Berkley

Although America's munition makers are thought to be reaping a financial bonanza from the Vietnam War, the facts indicate otherwise. In 1965, the top five defense contractors were General Dynamics, Lockheed, Douglas, General Electric and United Aircraft. By the beginning of 1969, one of the big five, Douglas, had been squeezed out of existence; a second one, Lockheed, was in trouble. Of the three remaining, two were under severe financial pressure. For many war contractors, Vietnam has been a headache; for others it has been disaster.

Look at the balance sheets. General Dynamics earned $4.48 a share in 1965, the year the Vietnam build-up got underway. By 1968, its per share earnings had dropped to $2.83. Lockheed netted $4.89 a share in 1965. By 1968, its per share earnings, computed on the same basis as those of 1965, came to only $1.64. General Electric's profits were running at $3.93 a share in 1965. In 1968, they amounted to $3.95, a miniscule gain of 2 cents. United Aircraft scored the only earnings improvement during these war years. Its profits rose from $4.57 to $5.05, an increase of about ten percent.

Even these figures overstate the munition makers' war "prosperity" for they fail to allow for inflation. If we assess their earnings records in terms of constant, 1965 dollars, we find that United Aircraft marked time during these years, General Electric's earnings went down by nearly ten percent, General Dynamic's decreased by almost one-half and Lockheed's plummeted by more than two-thirds.

On January 1, 1969, *Forbes* published a summary of how the top 500 American corporations had fared in earnings growth during the previous five years. How did the prime war contractors place in this comparative ranking? General Dynamics, the biggest defense supplier, ended up almost at the bottom of the list, placing 481. The other three held the following rankings on the earnings growth list: Lockheed 390, General Electric 371, United Aircraft 243. In other words, during the war buildup, those companies furnishing the sinews of that war were faring a good deal less well financially than most of those firms denied such opportunities. Statistics such as these lead us to ask a further question: Were the blotched earnings record of the big war contractors representative of those war contractors generally? Did small defense suppliers make out as poorly as their larger colleagues?

Generally speaking, they did. Grumman Aircraft for example, is number 11 on the list of defense suppliers, but since it is smaller than some of the others its government contracts make up over 80 percent of its gross revenues. The company earned $3.03 a share in 1965, and $2.68 a share in 1968. AVCO, another corporation that does nearly four-fifths of its business with the Defense Department, listed its earnings as $2.88 a share for the 12-month period ending November 1965. For the same period ending November, 1968, the figure was $2.54. Both these companies experienced better than ten percent declines as measured in inflationary dollars. Measured in constant dollars, the declines were closer to 20 percent.

Some companies turning out war products fared much better. Raytheon's earnings more than doubled, leaping from $1.03 in 1965, to $2.07 in 1968. McDonnell Aircraft, which took over the financially tottering Douglas in 1967, managed to log an earnings record of $3.38 in 1968 compared to $2.62 per share three years earlier. Boeing succeeded about as well as General Electric, its per share earnings inching up from $3.82 to $3.84 during the three-year period.

However, these brighter spots are largely explained by special factors. Wall Street analysts attribute Raytheon's increase to an earnings turnaround brought about by new management, reorganization and a multi-pronged drive into such nondefense activity as textbook publishing and home appliance manufacturing. McDonnell-Douglas' sudden upsurge in profits in 1968 – it had run deficits for 1966 and 1967 – was attributed by a Standard and Poor investment letter to stepped-up deliveries of DC-8 and DC-9 commercial jets. The same investment letter claimed that Boeing's ability to at least mark time during the war years was based on its success with its commercial planes, primarily the 707 and 727.

As one combs through investment letters, designed solely to help stock market speculators make decisions on their investments, one finds recurring evidence of the discrepancy between the amount of revenue that companies derive from war contracts and the amount of *profit* they obtain from such orders. Thus, in re-

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porting on Boeing on March 13, 1969, Standard and Poor notes that "over *half* of billings and the *bulk* of profits now come from commercial jetliners." (Emphasis added.) In appraising AVCO on September 15, 1969, Standard and Poor says, at one place, that "in 1967-8 about 77 percent of earnings came from commercial operations with the balance from government billings." Some paragraphs later, we find the sentence, "The Government Products Group accounts for the major portion of revenues." Similarly, Value Line investment service, in appraising North American Rockwell on July 25, 1969, notes that the company's commercial business was expected to reach 40 percent of its gross revenues in 1969, while accounting for over 50 percent of profits. In the same investment letter, Value Line noted that Ling-Temco-Vought had reduced its aerospace business to less than 20 percent of its gross revenue. In commenting on this, the service pointed out that the company's aerospace division had generated after tax profits of less than 0.3 percent last year.

Common sense tells us that such figures are wrong. After all, who should benefit from a war if not those who furnish its weapons? And haven't the defense contractors always been hungry for government business. Common sense told the Italians of the sixteenth century that if two unequal weights were dropped to the ground, the heavier would hit the ground first. But Galileo dropped two unequal weights from the top of the Tower of Pisa to prove that common sense was wrong.

Early this year, the Logistics Management Institute released a study showing that the average profit margin for all US industry was 8.7 percent of sales, but that the average profit margin on defense work was only 4.2 percent of sales. Since the all-industry average included the low-profit defense work, the actual profitability gap between defense and nondefense orders may be even greater than the better-than-two-to-one ratio that the figures suggest. The study was attacked in some quarters because it was based on data supplied by the defense contractors themselves. However, for reasons having to do with the stock market, which we will examine shortly, there is more of a tendency for defense manufacturers to overstate rather than understate their profits on war contracts. Furthermore, there are additional data to show that, if anything, defense work is even less remunerative than the LMI study indicates.

Once again let us turn to *Forbes*. Every year it publishes separate listings, ranking the top 500 corporations in terms of revenues, assets, profits, etc. If we extract the rankings of the top ten war contractors in 1968 from the list of revenues, and similarly take their rankings from the list of profits, we obtain a graphic picture of the return on defense work:

Top 10 War Suppliers	*Rank Based On Total Revenue*	*Rank Based On Total Profit*
General Dynamics	34	220
Lockheed	43	190
General Electric	5	13
United Aircraft	41	118
McDonnell-Douglas	17	60
AT & T	2	1
Boeing	22	74
Ling-Temco-Vought	31	232
North American Rockwell	6	94
General Motors	1	2

Now, in examining this list, let's first exclude American Telephone and Telegraph and General Motors. These corporation are so large that even though they are among the top ten, their defense business comes to only one or two percent of their gross revenues. In every single instance, the ranking of the remaining eight companies in terms of total profits earned is far, far below their rank in terms of total gross revenues. Moreover, all these companies have at least some nondefense business and, as already seen, such commercial business earns them much more, proportionally, than do their defense orders. Without their commercial business, the gap between their revenue position and their profit position would widen further.

Why are profit margins so poor and why, anomaly of anomalies, do they seem to be even poorer in war time than in peace time?

To answer this we should first note that defense orders were not always the mixed blessing for armaments makers that they are today. During the 1950s, many firms flourished on such business. It was the advent of Robert McNamara as Secretary of Defense that made the difference. McNamara changed the Defense Department's purchasing policy from a cost-plus to a fixed fee basis. The old cost-plus arrangement had allowed the military suppliers to charge the Pentagon whatever the project cost with a guaranteed profit added on. Furthermore, crafty contractors often found ways of including in costs, work that would benefit them in other areas. The fixed fee arrangement did away with blank checks. Contractors now have to stay within the bounds of the predetermined price if they expect to make a profit. Modern munitions-making is a complex business, however, and frequently unforeseen problems lie in wait for even the shrewdest. Lockheed's heavily publicized troubles with its C-4 Air Force Transport is one of many such instances.

Another problem besetting the defense industry is that its outlets for civilian business have grown markedly during the past decade. The economic lethargy of the Eisenhower years is behind us; the New Economics is established policy. The American economy picked up a startling momentum in the 1960s. In addition, various technological breakthroughs have

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given many aerospace companies considerable non-war-related business. When the war buildup began in 1965, many of them suddenly found themselves with too much business. The influx of war orders piled on top of civilian billings, forced them into uneconomic practices. These included giving employees extensive overtime work, which means paying them 50 or 100 percent more for work which, because of increasing fatigue, becomes increasingly less satisfactory. Too many orders may also mean hiring less skilled employees, overutilizing plant and machinery and doing other things that can narrow profits and even turn them into losses.

It was precisely such factors which drove Douglas to the wall, transforming its $14.6 million of profits in 1965 into a $27.6 million loss in 1966. A *New York Times* financial writer noted in late 1968 that Boeing was beginning to experience a similar situation: "There were signs . . . that Boeing's tremendous commercial backlog [added to "low return government work"] was producing some of the strains that ruined the Douglas Aircraft Corporation – too rapid a buildup of business, a squeeze on plant and manpower capacity and, in the case of Douglas . . . production problems and deficits." Boeing in the first six months of this year earned $1.03 per share compared to $1.85 in the first half of 1965. In constant dollars, this would constitute an earnings drop of over 50 percent. The firm was expected to do less well in the second half of '69.

As noted earlier, AVCO's earnings declined from 1965 to 1968. In February 1969, a New York stock brokerage house, Goodbody and Company, issued an investment appraisal of the firm, assessing its prospects if peace should come. Although nearly 80 percent of AVCO's business comes from the Defense Department, the brokerage house found that peace would actually enhance AVCO's investment appeal. Its letter noted, for example, that ". . . profit margins on helicopter engine business . . . have been adversely affected by uneconomic production schedules created by the heavy demands of the Vietnam War. With a slowdown in hostilities, which would probably bring a more even flow of production, profit margins should improve."

A final factor must be considered in explaining the wilting profit margins of so many munitions makers during recent years: inflation. The Keynsian-oriented, welfare-state capitalism that has characterized European economies since World War II, and which began to take hold in the United States during the 1960s, has reversed the normal capitalist imbalance. Where at one time capitalism tended to suffer from too much supply in relation to demand, it now tends to enjoy the opposite. I say enjoy because this situation keeps up employment and wages and encourages growth. However it makes inflation a persistent threat. Thus, war which was once an elixir to capitalism has become anathama instead. Lack of military spending has brought many blessings to Japanese capitalism in recent decades. Too much military spending in the United States is reducing 1969 business profits, adjusted for inflation, to a level below that of 1965. And 1970 will probably be worse.

The military suppliers are, if anything, more susceptible than other branches of American industry to these ravages of inflation. Not only do they find their costs rising, but often they have a harder time passing such costs on to the consumer – in this case, the government. Inflation for a full-throttle economy is not a boon but a bane, and for a defense contractor, working under a deluge of orders on a fixed fee basis, and requiring a high proportion of scarce skilled labor to meet them, it can prove a disaster.

There is yet another problem that plagues munitions makers – the impact of Wall Street.

Stocks do not sell on profits alone. The auction market, which is the American securities industry, takes into account a variety of factors in determining what price a company's share will command. In 1969, the stocks of military suppliers were selling, on an average, at about 8 or 9 times their earnings. The average stock on the New York Stock Exchange, meanwhile, was selling at about 16 times earnings. (The average price-earnings ratio on the American Stock Exchange was higher still.) Thus, firms with a high defense component in their production operations have not only tended to make less money but have also been less able to capitalize on such earnings as they do make. This discrepancy between marketability of defense company stock compared to those of other companies is not simply a result of the prospective end of the Vietnam war. The gap between what their earnings can command in the financial markets vis-a-vis what other companies can obtain has existed for years.

A good price for its stock offers many desirable advantages for a business firm and its managers. First, it increases the managers' personal wealth. Much has been said in recent years about the separation of ownership from management in American industry but this should not obscure the fact that managers usually own some stock in the firms they run. If Wall Street chose to give armament industries the same price-earnings multiple that it gives other technological companies, the men who run America's araments would realize a windfall of personal profit.

The managers of munitions industries have other reasons for wanting to see their stock priced at the levels of nondefense firms. The higher price increases management prestige and stockholder satisfaction. The latter factor can be quite important. There are many individuals and companies on the prowl in Wall Street these days, seeking firms with disgruntled stockholders who might be receptive to an aquisition offer. At the

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same time, a host of stock brokerage firms and investment counselors are constantly checking out reports, comparing company performances and suggesting ways in which the private investor can best put his money to work. Such elements put increasing pressure on those who run defense industries to appease their stockholders with better prices for their shares.

Meanwhile, war contractors are on the lookout themselves for tempting acquisition possibilities. They too have been showing an increasing predilection for taking over other firms and this makes an attractive price for their stock almost mandatory. Most mergers are based on an exchange of securities between the merger and the merged, and the higher the evaluation that Wall Street places on the shares of the former, the better the terms he can offer to the latter. Thus, the heavy discount which defense contractors' stock sells for these days is putting a severe crimp in their expansion plans, and making them vulnerable to raids by Wall Street predators. This helps explain why they are more apt to overstate rather than understate the profitability of their war contracts. Lockheed, for example, sought to minimize its losses on the C-4 air cargo plane for the Air Force.

One may wonder why business firms want defense contracts at all. Some industries *are* avoiding them. In January, 1967, *Iron Age*, the steel industry magazine, reported that steel makers were refusing to bid on defense work. Despite the fact that the Vietnam War was choking off steel orders in such areas as construction and auto production, the companies were showing little desire to compensate by going after defense contracts.

Those industries specifically geared for defense contracting do remain in the armaments-making race and often bid zealously on such work. Despite the flood of defense orders which the Vietnam War has brought them, however, most munitions makers have succeeded in gradually increasing their commercial business. The industrial end of the military-industrial complex is seeking to extricate itself from the dubious and often dismal fortunes of war.

Many such firms are finding expanded opportunities in the commercial aircraft sector. In 1968, such private business accounted for 47 percent of McDonnell-Douglas total sales. By the start of 1969, its commercial orders had increased to 68 percent of the company's backlog. Today, it is engaged in heavy competition with Lockheed for the coming wave of air bus production. It claims to have signed up 184 customers for its DC-10 which will carry about 300 passengers and will gross the company about $14.5 million each. Lockheed claims to have 181 orders for its L-1011 Tristar air bus, which will sell at the same price, and is counting on a total market of 1400 planes during the 1970s. (Its backlog of orders for these planes by the end of last year had a dollar value of 2.5 billion, 15 percent more than its entire billing for all work in 1968.) Boeing, meanwhile, says it has orders for 183 of its still larger air buses, the 747, which will be priced at $20 million each. Boeing's commercial orders had already reached 86 percent of its backlog by the end of last year, as compared to only 50 percent of its sales during the year, and the proportion of such backlog orders will undoubtedly cross the 90 percent mark at the end of 1969.

The aerospace industry has assembled the greatest pool of technological manpower in the world, and our ever increasingly technological society is beckoning them into newer civilian fields. United Aircraft's Sikorsky Division, long associated with helicoptors, has built the experimental turbo trains that now run between Boston and New York. The apparent success of these trains offers the division numerous opportunities to transfer its energies to peacetime uses. Lockheed, in addition to its commercial aircraft business, is moving heavily into underseas technology, computers and medical information retrieval systems. LTV Aerospace is developing and marketing new systems for controlling automobile traffic. The aerospace industry is tooling up for a peacetime world of the 1970s that will in all probability earn it much more money than the war years of the late sixties.

Some munitions makers are even stepping outside their accustomed areas of competence to strengthen their tie-in with more profitable civilian activity. AVCO has taken over finance and insurance companies and is planning to build an entire community in California. Such endeavors will receive a great boost once the Vietnam War ends and the expected housing boom, long stifled by war-caused high interest rates, gets underway. Raytheon is counting on a post-war housing boom to provide opportunities to sell its new home heating system, as well as to increase orders for its home appliances division. The company's newly aquired textbook division also stands to benefit considerably from a shift of the country's resources to nonmilitary purposes.

These promising developments will not take most of the munition makers out of munitions-making completely. Despite the low profitability of such work and the existence of more profitable opportunities in the civilian sector, any new contracts that arise for defense work will probably find at least some suppliers ready to bid. As they diversify into the civilian sector, however, they should become a less troublesome element in American society. Improbable though it may seem, many defense suppliers, motivated by sheer greed, may eventually join other industry leaders, Wall Street speculators and such business-oriented magazines as *Fortune* and *Forbes* in calling for a curtailment in defense spending and a shift to the more lucrative pursuits of peace.

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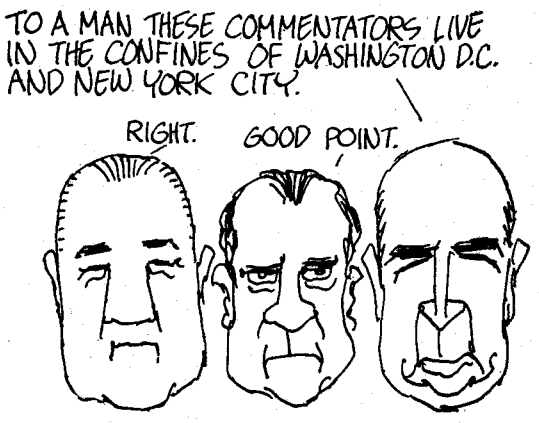
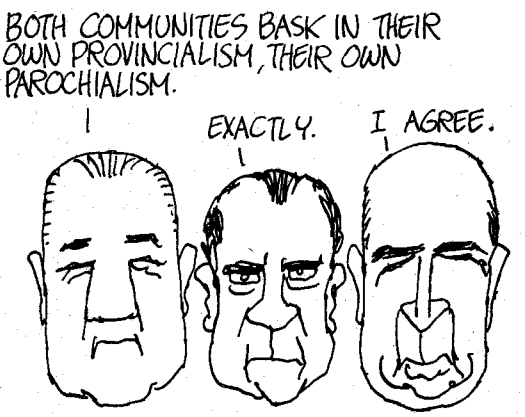
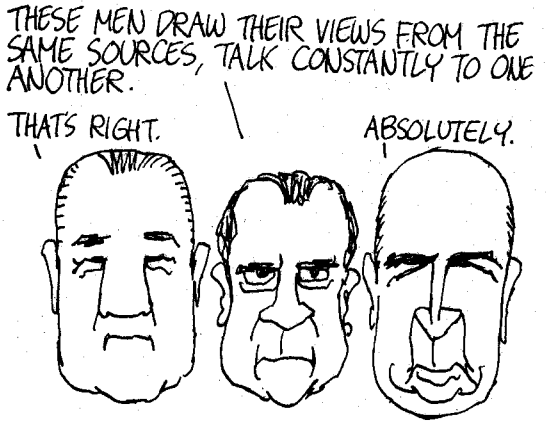
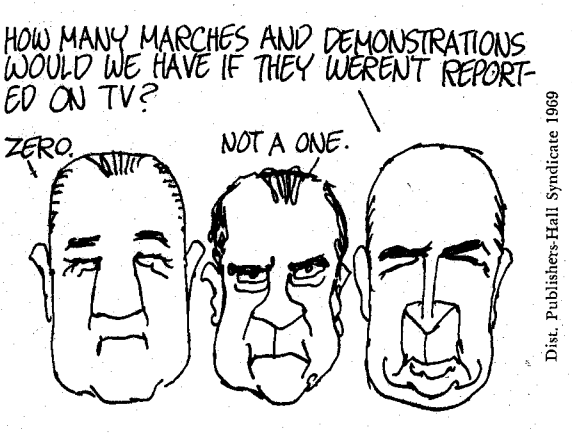
JULES FEIFFER









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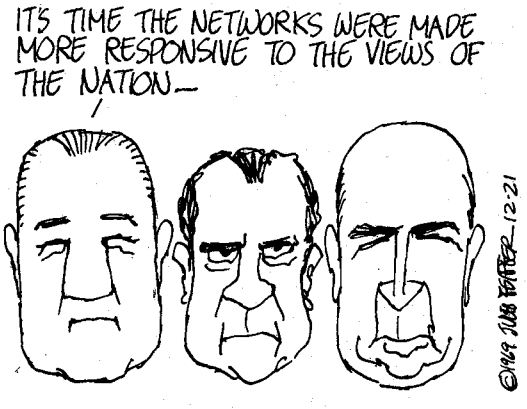

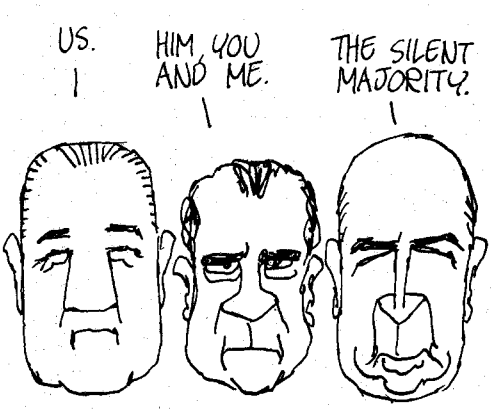

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Stanley Kauffmann on films

John and Mary
(20th Century-Fox)

Notes on a Cowardly Lion
by John Lahr
(Knopf; $8.95)

The best thing about *John and Mary* is that it recently prompted two funny articles in the *New Statesman* (of London). On October 10 the author of the original novel, Mervyn Jones, recounted how his "trivial little book" had been bought to be filmed on a small scale in London, how he had declined to write the screenplay because the offer was made in a restaurant so noisy that it irritated him, how he learned subsequently that the scale and the locale and the director had been changed. When he was finally able to read the screenplay (no easy job to get a copy), "I came across occasional reminders of my novel." It was now to be directed by Peter Yates, so "I went to see *Bullitt*, directed by Mr. Yates. The direction and photography were obviously remarkable, and it was probably my fault that I never grasped what was happening or the motives of any of the characters." When Jones learned that Mia Farrow had been cast as Mary, he had further apprehensions because "a theme of some importance in my novel is that Mary is endowed with, and John is attracted by, the feature known as a *derrière en poire*." Nevertheless, he concluded: "I do look forward to seeing *John and Mary* at my local Odeon." (Poor man.)

His article was called "On Being Filmed." Two weeks later, John Mortimer, who did the screenplay, weighed in with "On Filming Mr. Jones." It was amusing, first, because Mortimer assumed two conventional phony hauteurs: the literary type who has gone slumming in Movieland for money and expects other Parnassians to understand, and the Briton who has gone slumming in Yankeeland for money and expects compatriots to understand. Basically his piece was an affected apologia for hack-writing (and the script is certainly a hack job) – something that many great writers have done but for which few have apologized. But Mortimer is funny about the way he was dizzily "conferenced" and how he was administered doses of New York atmosphere (the new locale) as if they were intravenous infusions.

I haven't read Jones's novel, but the film makes me wonder what all the fuss was about. The studio could have blindfolded a four-year-old child, asked him to reach up to the dusty shelves of thirties comedy-romances and pull down any one of them for remake. All they had to do then was update the slang and change the sex-hints to sex. In 1935 Claudette Colbert would have looked cute in Fred MacMurray's oversize pajamas as she snuggled virginally into his bed, while Fred tried to make himself comfortable on the too-short living-room sofa. Here it begins with Miss Farrow and Dustin Hoffman waking up in the same bed, in the morning, naked, after a meeting the night before in an East Side "singles" pub. But it's the same old idea: the couple who meet and get entangled before they know each other, and who only afterward fall in love. In fact, it would have been better as a thirties film because flirting, instead of frankness, is better suited to this cutesy story. (And it would have eliminated the gratingly coarse dialogue given to a friend of Hoffman's.)

Miss Farrow substantiates Jones's worry. She has been very good in some neurotic roles – in *Secret Ceremony* and in *Rosemary's Baby*; but where she is supposed to have charm, and where that charm is supposed to come from physical appeal, the result is dubious. Whoever is managing Dustin Hoffman has chosen well for him. A light hip lover is a good change after *Midnight Cowboy*, which was a good change after *The Graduate* – and is especially good before his next appearance in the film of Thomas Berger's splendid novel, *Little Big Man*. Those who saw Hoffman's last theater appearance in *Jimmy Shine* or who saw him as the brash young cockney in *Eh?* will be less astonished at his versatility here but no less admiring. In terms of building his image as a versatile star, though on no other, this film was a good choice for Hoffman.

Peter Yates's direction of *Bullitt* was an amalgam of various TV private-eye styles. Here his opening shot reminded me of the opening of Hitchcock's *Mr. and Mrs. Smith*; after that, he seemed less certain about whom to imitate.

Bert Lahr spent most of his career in the theater. It's especially significant, then, that the title of his biography refers to one of his relatively few film roles. (A social comment in itself.) And it gives me a chance to discuss *Notes on a Cowardly Lion* in a film column.

John Lahr had the good luck to be his father's son, something that many thousands of us keenly envy him. The outstanding quality of his book is that he appreciates his luck: his affection for his father is immediately clear, and it glows throughout the nearly four hundred (big) pages. Also, John Lahr is aware – though on a modest level of perception – of the large cultural transitions through which his father lived, as they were manifested in the theater. Bert Lahr, born in New York of German-Jewish parents in 1895, broke into show business in 1910 when burlesque and vaudeville were bubbling and constantly demanded new materials. As the author says, it was a seller's market. When the comedian began, he used a "station-house" German accent and frequently played in schoolroom sketches, in which various accents were used – a direct response to the experience of the immigrant audiences. Toward the end of his life, Bert Lahr was in the first US production of *Waiting for Godot*. En route he encountered films and, as they were invented, radio and television. His career was a distillation of change.

His son is somewhat overimpressed by the contrast between the public clown and the private worrier. *Pagliacci* aside, this contrast is a commonplace of the theater. One of the oldest theater jokes is about the great clown Grimaldi. A man goes to a doctor because he feels depressed. The doctor examines him and says, "Sir, I can find nothing physically wrong with you. You just need cheering up. Go to see Grimaldi." The patient says, "But, doctor, I *am* Grimaldi." John Lahr's closeness and concern have produced a certain naïveté in him on this point – not for reporting the truth but for losing perspective on it. (I mean the

(Continued on page 34)

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Reed Whittemore:

A Prejudiced View of the Social Sciences

The Behavioral and Social Sciences — Outlook and Needs

National Academy of Sciences and Social Science Research Council
(Prentice-Hall; $7.95)

As a Humanities man I carry with me an image of the Social Sciences out of science fiction: an organism resembling jello that keeps expanding, filling up rooms and continents. Its opponents, while being absorbed, are able to say nothing, or merely "glub glub."

I want to say more than "glub glub." This volume has the look of a school text but is in fact a high level survey of the Social Sciences as a whole, together with a modest plan for world conquest. It tends to confirm my reactionary Humanities view. Social and behavioral scientists are ambitious and expansionist. They see *their* revolution coming, and rub their hands:

> The broad application of their knowledge to human problems necessarily entails a change in our conception of ourselves and how we should live together, work and govern ourselves, teach and learn, talk and listen. Instead of offering a piece of technology to fix a specific problem, the behavioral sciences may suggest ways for men to organize their relationships more satisfactorily and to improve the adaptive process itself. There can be no higher ambition for a science and none more humane.

Just reading that passage gives me a sense of the invading jello. The passage is well and deftly expressed, not an example of old-time, big-word sociological jargon; but its easy manipulation of grand problems and processes makes me wish there *were* a piece of technology in it, something that didn't quiver. Whoever its author is – it is a committee production – he has already been revolutionized rhetorically. He has none of the word difficulties early social scientists had in describing composite beings, average beings, beings who had been "ized."

He (the author) is none other than the Behavorial and Social Sciences Survey Committee, which was sponsored by the Committee on Science and Public Policy of the National Academy of Sciences and the Committee on Problems and Policy of the Social Science Research Council (note how the invading jello occupies even this reviewing space). The book contains a good many recommendations, major and minor, for moving toward the proposed revolution, but its first proposal is the key to the whole: the development of " a system of social indicators."

We can already measure economic values in dollars, the committee tells us, but "there is no corresponding unit of value to measure the quality of life." Well gosh all hemlock, let's get one. First, we will need a "national data system" and then we will need a new federal agency to protect us from the national data system. Then we will have to expand the amount of social science research, and then we will need new schools to be called graduate schools of applied behavioral science. All these needs will be hard to satisfy, but, gosh, the social sciences "are our best hope, in the long run, for understanding our problems in depth and for providing new means of lessening ten-

Are You Running With Me Jesus?

"people are running . . ." *Parade Magazine*

Billy Graham wherever he is,
George Romney every day
Senator Proxmire to the Capitol and home again.

Are you running with me, Jesus
asks the Reverend Malcolm Boyd.

May I ask the same?

I'm not matching my stride
With Billy Graham's by the Clyde.
I'm not going for distance
With the Senator's persistence.
I'm not trying to win a race
Even at George Romney's pace.

I'm an existential runner,
Indifferent to space.
I'm running here in place.

Wall to wall unending,
Baseboard to baseboard unchanging,
The treadmill carpet flows

From the looms of Mohawk.
As I run against the clock,
Are you running with me Jesus,
Or not?

Eugene J. McCarthy

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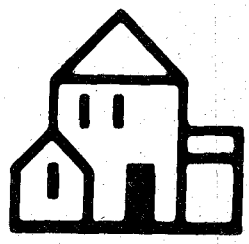

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sions and improving our common life."

Only a few months ago I was sitting unprofitably in my office not improving our common life when I received a call from a not-to-be-named social scientist who wanted help in organizing a meeting to establish some decent evaluation procedures in literature and the arts. I was the only literary man he had called, and after his call I sickened rapidly and lost touch. I would have lost touch anyway. I see every reason to believe that literary criticism and aesthetics will be listed among the social sciences in a year or two, joining language and history. All these disciplines need to be shaped up if they are to help in the building of the quality-of-life indicator, and only true social scientists can shape them.

Some of my best friends are social scientists (and some of my worst enemies are literary critics). I am not anxious to be, or be called, a Luddite. Yet behind this book's facade of moderate, plodding committee reasonableness, I see the unreason of a conquering idea. It is evident in the passage already quoted; it is evident in the proposal for the giant indicator; and it is evident unobstrusively in the attitude *behind* many of the book's statements (the italics below are mine, to point up the attitude):

– Shakespeare described life as a play; others have thought of it as a game. It remained for von Neumann and Morgenstern, a mathematician and an economist, to take the game notion *seriously* . . .

– Human behavior, even in complex social situations, *begins* to be understandable in terms of the capabilities for remembering, learning and responding that are being revealed by research on simple human tasks in the psychological laboratory . . .

– Nation building is *now* a fascinating problem for political scientists.

Let the quotations stop. A sympathetic reviewer would point out that the book is full of cautionary qualifications; further, that its proposed revolution is still far away. Yes, but what impresses me is the extent to which revolution has already occurred: the book seems scholarly and inoffensive because we've already *had* it. Where once each person thought of himself first by name he now thinks first of his race, class, persuasion, blood type, bracket. The experimenters have been influencing us who comprise the experiment for so long and so effectively that we don't even feel the influence. An abstraction *can* walk down Main Street; thinking will make it (him) so.

The Commitee claims that the fears that the social and behavioral sciences will mechanize us are "not well founded." Gosh all hemlock!

The Sad Committee Shaggy

In good ole day ze king need
no committee.

Was nize.

Him says, them does; him sells,
them buys.

Good system.

But then come big push make king
one of guys.

So king buy chairs, say me no king
me chairman.

So knocked off paradize.

AD HOC

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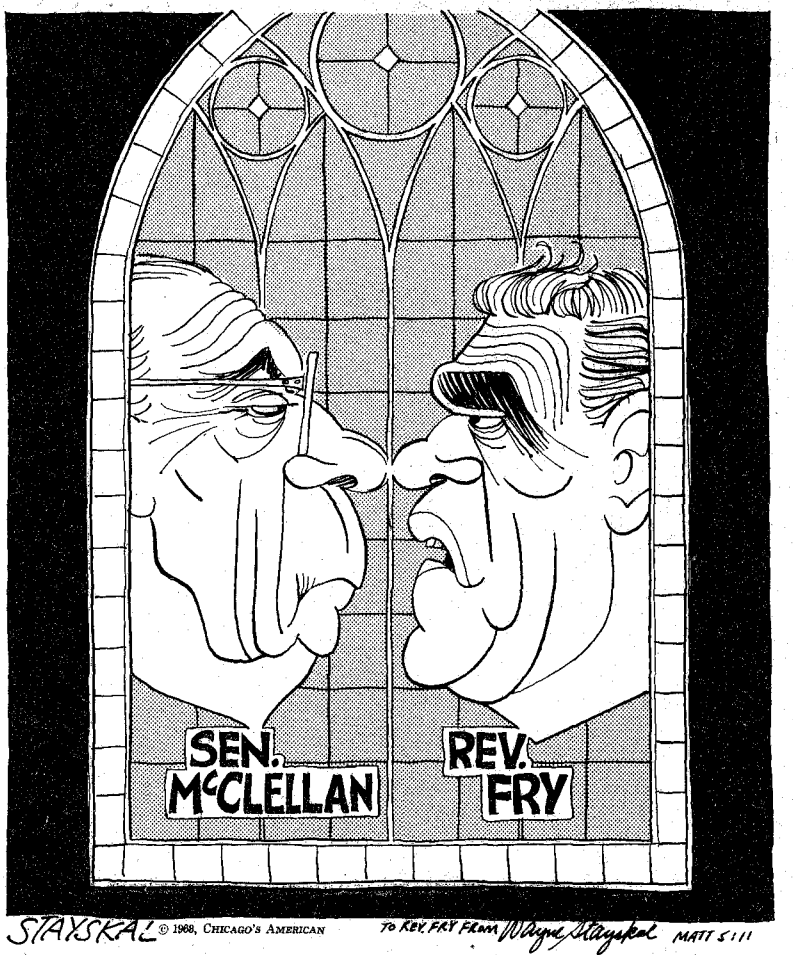

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Hilton Kramer: The Vocabulary of Praise

Alone with America by Richard Howard

(Atheneum, $12.95)

In his Foreword to this voluminous collection of "Essays on the Art of Poetry in the United States since 1950," Richard Howard – himself a poet of increasing distinction – acknowledges his debt to "a generation of great critics of poetry," and specifically mentions Eliot, Ransom, Winters, Burke, Blackmur, and Tate as well as Frye, Wimsatt, and Nemerov. No one undertaking the task which Mr. Howard has set for himself – to provide a critical "reconnaissance" of the large number of poets who have emerged in the last two decades – could pretend, I suppose, to remain untouched by the vast changes in standards and procedures which these great critical eminences brought to the discussion of modern poetry. Yet it would be difficult to imagine a book further removed in style, sympathy, and method from the characteristic utterances of this older generation of critics than the stout volume Mr. Howard is now offering us.

Whereas the mission of this older generation was, necessarily, often one of narrow discrimination, of legislating *against* certain poetic practices in order to sharpen our understanding of a new and sometimes very difficult poetic canon, Mr. Howard's criticism is distinguished for the breadth of its sympathies and the size of its appetite. He enjoys the advantage, of course, of being in a position to assume the very existence of that appreciation of modernist poetics that this older and more stringent body of criticism made possible. But he approaches this advantage with an admirable confidence, and exploits it with an uncommon energy and almost prodigal intelligence.

The energy is often woefully undisciplined, however, and the intelligence is often maddening in the excursions and digressions it permits itself. Mr. Howard exercises a freedom, not only of taste and emphasis but even in such matters as vocabulary, syntax, and comprehensibility, that would have been unthinkable to an earlier generation of critics. (There are page-long sentences in *Alone with America* that leave one's mind climbing the walls.) Yet, though the difficulty which this freedom may sometimes cause the reader is not to be dismissed, it is, I think, essential to the mode of criticism Mr. Howard has chosen to practice. For he is, above all, an enthusiast. He places no distance between himself and the poetry he is writing about. He

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immerses himself in it totally, and does so without apology or facile invocations to the zeitgeist. He not only likes this poetry – most of it, anyway – but is clearly prepared to live by it. And he brings to it a vocabulary of praise far larger, less inhibited, and more illuminating than any we have had from a critic of contemporary poetry since R. P. Blackmur wrote his early essays on the poets of his own generation.

This is, then, a mode of criticism that places itself beyond what Mr. Howard calls the "gang wars of our poetry." It is only at this altitude that a critic can move with such unbroken and unembarrassed ease from a discussion of Edgar Bowers ("the poem of decorum gains its strength from the very chaos it has overcome") to a discussion of Gregory Corso ("in all its vulgarities and distractions and boastings, there lie, disparate, yearning for union and the release of choosing, the elements of a giant art"). One doesn't quite believe in this unrealized "giant art" any more than one is persuaded that Allen Ginsberg is "capable of a great spiritual revelation." But the essay on Corso is nonetheless a poignant reminder of the "general revulsion from the dialectic of our culture" which is the central inspiration for poetry of this persuasion. Mr. Howard extends his sympathies to this revulsion, or at least to the poetry that issues from it, but he is rarely at his best in dealing with it. He himself writes from a position securely embedded in this "dialectic," and exhibits a far deeper affinity for poets who, though often alienated from its social fabric, find a natural refuge in its more arduous and more refined artistic processes.

For this reason, perhaps, the essay on Ginsberg breaks down in the most commonplace way: the critic allows the figure of the poet, who is now a veritable fixture in "the dialectic of our culture," to swamp the poetry, which lies partly outside it. Mr. Howard is on surer ground with poets like himself who conduct their quarrels and effect their revisions of feeling wholly within the boundaries of this culture. Hence the altogether dazzling account of John Ashbery, whose poetry has gradually jettisoned nearly all reference to any experience lying beyond the immediate experience of making the poem. Mr. Howard's essay on Ashbery is, at times, very difficult reading, but it succeeds in illuminating this most hermetic of contemporary poets as no other critical inquiry has.

For myself, I think Mr. Howard is most interesting in writing about poets who have not carried the victory of art over experience to such an extreme conclusion – poets for whom every element of style is still a battleground (as one no longer feels it is in Ashbery's poems) between the claims of art and the imperatives of a suffering moral intelligence. Thus, while the essay on Ashbery traces an absorbing esthetic progress, the essay on James Dickey traces a vivid moral quest. Between the "spattered and pointillist" phrases of Ashbery's poems and the "novelistic detail" of Dickey's, there is not only a radical difference in style but a fundamental difference in the relation of the poet to the world.

But Dickey is, perhaps, an easier case than most, and Mr. Howard is equally good on poets whose styles do not disclose their internal moral energies quite so readily. Writing about the poetry of Robert Creeley, he goes at once to the heart of the matter, establishing for us the relation in which this poet's much celebrated laconic style ("a very narrow rivulet of print between ample meadows of margin") stands to the "absolute gist of solitude" from which it issues. "Experi-

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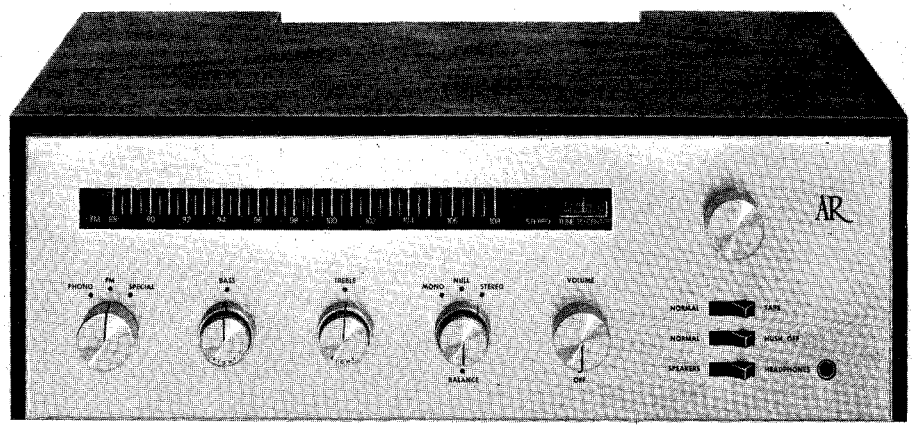

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ence, then, is for him," Mr. Howard writes, "a matter of separation"; "the subjects most often thought to involve connection, *love* and *language*" are understood to signify for Creeley "a kind of ecstasy of isolation." And although Mr. Howard speaks of the poet's "splendid unconcern for external relations" and notes the use of "an imagery pulverized beyond the recognition of shared contours," he is not without certain doubts about the moral vision implicit in this style: "it must be the greatest impoverishment to live in a world without recurrence."

Mr. Howard is very little given to moralizing; this is, indeed, the closest he ever comes to it. And it is all the more persuasive because it is so clearly derived not from any impulse to impose a system of morals upon the poetic imagination but from a concern to safeguard the very resources by which that imagination lives.

There are forty-one essays in *Alone with America*, each devoted to a single *oeuvre*, and it says something about the variety and fertility of our poetry just now that, far from wanting to quarrel with the size of Mr. Howard's roster of achievement, one is left feeling a little unhappy about the large number of poets who have been omitted from this ambitious study. For the truth is that we are living in a period of almost unprecedented poetic accomplishment in this country – unprecedented, certainly, so far as the history of American poetry is concerned. We may be more certain about the genius of the great poets who came to maturity in the period of the First World War and the nineteen-twenties, but it is astonishing to see how reluctant we have been to acknowledge the extent to which the true successors to these poets now abound. The blight that criticism was alleged to have brought to poetry has proved to be of amazingly short duration. The well-known indifference of the reading public, even at the upper levels of sensibility, seems, if anything, to have provided our poets with a zone of silence in which to develop at their own rate of speed. The want of attention has proved to have its uses.

Mr. Howard's book brings this period of inattention to a close. He compels us to acknowledge the achievement in our midst, and inaugurates the lines of inquiry on which (one hopes) a great deal of future discussion will take place. He writes as an advocate, an impassioned insider. He is not always clear; he indulges a great many – too many – vanities in his own prose style; he is often irritating even in the act of illuminating. But he performs the essential critical service. He shows us the extent of the terrain. He points out its essential features. And he gives us a very vivid sense of its ethos as well as of its esthetics.

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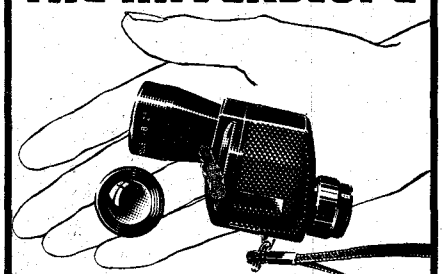

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Clarence Brown: The Callus Behind the Fiction

Journal of a Novel (The *East of Eden* Letters) by John Steinbeck

(Viking; $7.50)

Steinbeck thought that every man had one book in him and that *East of Eden* was his. This naturally made him nervous. It made him, when he finally brought himself to try the book, turn to a kind of athlete's compulsive checking and record-keeping and not a little voodoo to ward off the demons that impede creation: telephones, depression, doorbells, children, advice, and bad pencils. In a large ledger that his editor, Pascal Covici, had given him he wrote letters to Covici on the left-hand page at the start of each working day and the novel on the right. He began at the end of January 1951 and wrote straight through the year deep into the fall. Then the novel, except for some revision, was finished. Just before starting, Steinbeck had emerged from the writer's peculiar hell of a long dry spell and the general hell of a divorce that had deprived him of two sons. But he had remarried, this time to a woman who gave him a buoyant serenity that is evident throughout his journal, and the novel started to come.

East of Eden, as it chances, is the story of two sons who turn up in several guises but always with indelible traces of their models, Cain and Abel. It is also explicitly the story of Steinbeck's own family narrated by himself in his own name and person. Little wonder that he saw it as his one book, for it is his own primal story and the primal story of Man. He read the latter with all the emotional intensity that informs his best pages, the result being that he gradually identified it with the former. When he had settled into his new room and his new chair, before his new drafting table and his new ledger, one part of Steinbeck's mind was anxiously prodding, taunting and encouraging the other. It proposed

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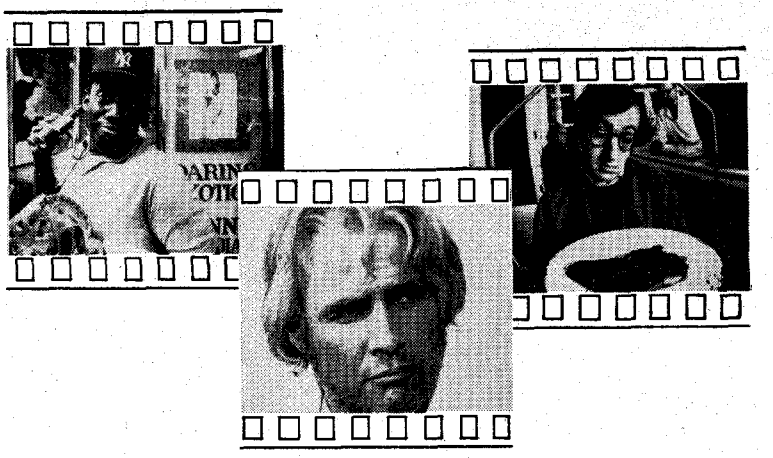

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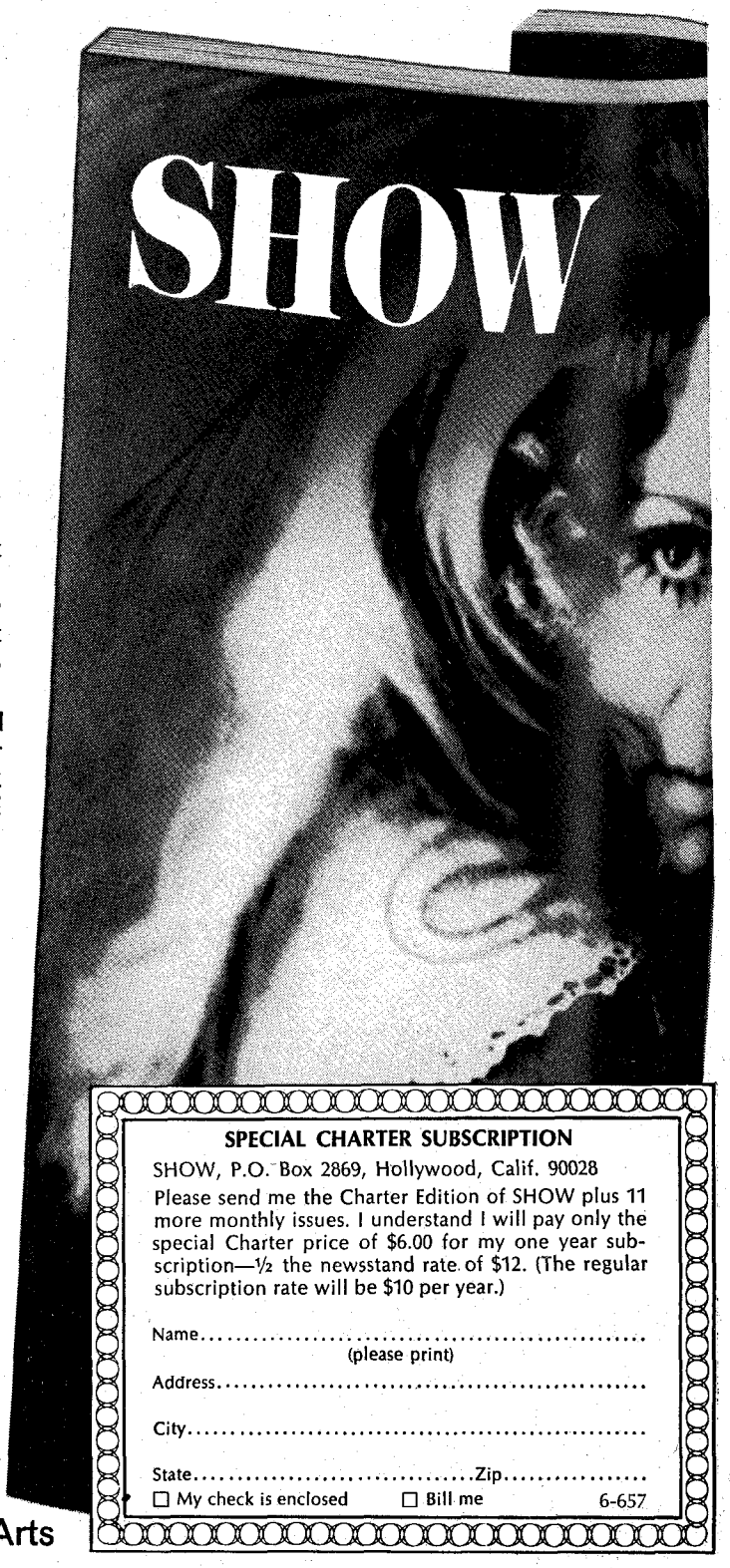

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MONTHLY REVIEW

Edited by Paul M. Sweezy and Harry Magdoff

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paradoxes. In the journal the paradox is that a man might arrange himself ever so comfortably, his bowels and soul in some celestial harmony, and still be unable to write. But the paradox of the novel is the supreme, the biblical, paradox of good and evil, of the murderer's *freedom* to triumph over his sin. For passionate analysis, whatever it may lack in scholarship, there must be nothing in all the annals of hermeneutics to match Steinbeck's pages on the single Hebrew verb *timshel*. So the novel is infinitely the greater book, but its greatness confers a remarkable distinction upon the journal.

The journal, never meant for publication, is repetitious and contradictory, but these qualities are not faults, for they provide precious insights into a writer's hesitant awareness of what he was doing. The faults of the book belong chiefly to Steinbeck's anonymous editors, or perhaps just to circumstance. The journal is meaningless without a fresh reading of the novel from which, in a strictly physical sense, it was excised; but even with such reading you are not always sure just which passage is being referred to, and the editors' help on this point is haphazard. But incomparably the greatest lack of all is that of Pascal Covici.

Covici was clearly the kind of editor that every writer longs for, or ought to. His relationship is not that of Maxwell Perkins to Thomas Wolfe, whose ungovernable creativity Perkins brought under some kind of control. If Covici took a hand in Steinbeck's novel, he did it simply by being the one perfect reader of it. In the first draft, parts of the novel had the form of letters to Steinbeck's two boys. But this was abandoned, and I think the reason is clear: the novel itself was never really addressed to anyone but Covici. From 1934, when his editor discovered him – three novels had done poorly and a fourth, *Tortilla Flat*, was being rejected by all publishers – until 1964, when Covici died, he was the writer's confidant, goad, quartermaster and – in Steinbeck's consciousness, I think – his single auditor. Eliot said that writing comes from talking – to oneself, to one other, or to God. For Steinbeck, Covici was the "one other." *East of Eden* was dedicated to him. So, incidentally, was Saul Bellow's *Herzog*. And so was Charles A. Madison's *Book Publishing in America* (McGraw-Hill 1966), which I had to unearth from the British Museum for such information on Covici as one might reasonably expect to find in a preface to Steinbeck's journal. Madison quotes something that Steinbeck said after Covici's death: "Pat Covici was much more than my friend. He was my editor . . . He demanded of me more than I had and thereby caused me to be more than I should have been without him." And from Covici, in 1941: "In my little life, which is about three-quarters done, you are my rarest experience . . ." It was that sense of being at least one man's rarest experience that banished from Steinbeck's mind the clouds of depression, the sick fear of rejection and failure, certain frightening impulses in his own soul (all plentifully attested to) and enabled him to write.

The question how Steinbeck or any artist can fuse the dark night of the soul with the radiance of love for wife, sons, and friend into the alchemical product of art is beyond my competence, but I am convinced that this journal will provide material for part of the answer. He was obsessive about the daily production quota. One day, early on in the journal, he perversely declines to work (though he wrote the letter). He will have his hair cut. He might "go farther and get a little sweet-smelling tonic rubbed on. This is a real festive day for me with garlands. And you, old word-Scrooge, will curse and mutter because I am wasting time. Well, I defy you." That is an extraordinary tone of voice, as extraordinary as his non-feasance, and it is uncomfortably somewhere between flirt and bitch. Where does it come from? The answer is elsewhere in the passage, for Steinbeck is preparing to introduce Cathy, whose warped malignancy runs through the novel like the stain of Man's first disobedience. I think he was discovering her in himself, though it was much later in the journal that he explicitly realized his greater kinship with her than with any other character in the book.

I treasure his testimony concerning the physical side of writing. The writing callus on his middle finger grew to bothersome proportions. When he

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

HILTON KRAMER *is art critic for* The New York Times. CLARENCE BROWN, *Professor of Russian literature at Princeton, is currently on leave in London to complete a book on the Russian poet Osip Mandelstam.*

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cut his thumb carving something out of wood, the writing suffered. Earlier the slant of his table had seemed wrong, and when he changed it, improving his posture, the work went easier. There was a glare on the light wood of the table, so he painted it black, which was a bad idea, so he put down a restful, green blotter. But all this is mere frippery when compared to the question of pencils. I should like to propose that Steinbeck's numerous comments on the basic instruments of authorship be made into a syllabus for the first course in "creative writing." I am not in the employ of Eberhard Faber, but I regard it as a duty to set down his devotion to the Blackwing ("Half the Pressure Twice the Speed") and, for other moods and stages of inspiration, the Mongol 480 No. 2⅜F round.

Writers alone will understand that they can use no other information in the book. His comments on character, pace, construction, and so on, are professionally worthless, since if Steinbeck has any message at all, it is that practically nothing can be learned from predecessors, and the little that can must be painfully disremembered. A novel is oneself or it is nothing. He wrote a novel of two families against a background of history with an explicitly moral purpose and an explicitly present author. His method was sharp juxtaposition. But he was not building on Tolstoy: he was reinventing him. That his reinvention lagged behind the original is not so bad when you recall that mere imitation would have been unreadable.

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"What's to be done? Those who want most earnestly to pry the US loose [from Vietnam] are divided over how best to go about it" (*NR*, Nov. 15). The US would have much less trouble prying itself loose from Vietnam if our political leaders would pry themselves loose from their treadmill of stereotyped thinking about Vietnam. Instead of regarding North Vietnam as an enemy to be outwitted or defeated, why doesn't somebody in authority begin thinking of North Vietnam as a potential friend, to be courted rather than rejected? Not long ago Japan and Germany were as bitter enemies of the US as North Vietnam is today – yet Japan and Germany are now our close friends and allies. Hanoi's communism should be no barrier to our friendship: last February Mr. Nixon himself went seeking the friendship of communist Romania, and we have long been friends with communist Yugoslavia. Precedents for friendship with Hanoi are not lacking.

I suggest that we begin a serious effort to make North Vietnam our best friend in Southeast Asia. We should begin by an offer of about $10 billion in outright aid during each of the next five years – a sum that is a fraction of what we are already spending on this miserable war. At the same time, we should order an immediate cease-fire on our side, agree to withdraw all our troops by the end of 1970, and guarantee that South Vietnam will be allowed to decide by free elections in 1970 what her relationship shall be to North Vietnam. In return, Hanoi would agree to use none of our economic aid

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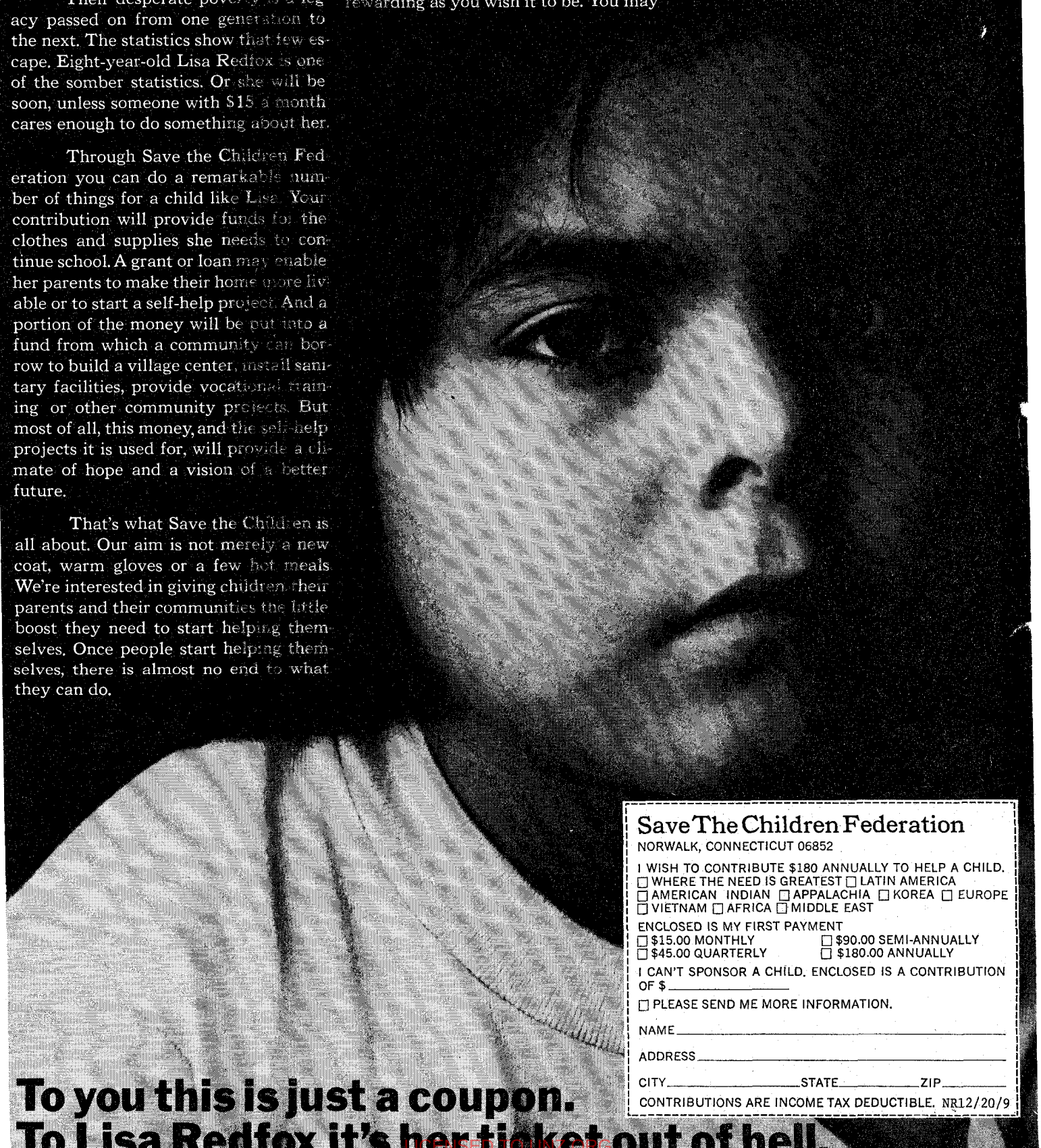

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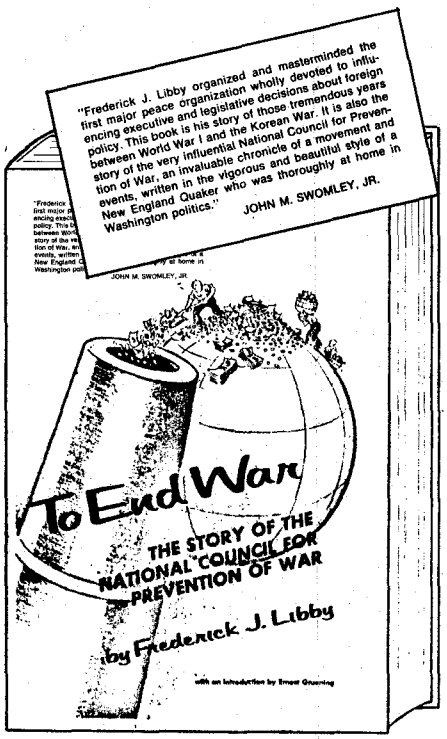
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for military hardware, to withdraw its own troops from South Vietnam at once, and to abide (for ten years at least) by the results of the South Vietnamese elections.

Would Hanoi accept our offer of aid and friendship? The chances are probably excellent that she would. North Vietnam is an impoverished nation with a normal budget of only about $4.5 billion annually. It has little industry; it must import much of its food; its natural resources are undeveloped; it has only one doctor for every 8000 people, and only one hospital for every 35,000; its educational system is limited and rudimentary; it has not yet recovered from the plastering dealt by our bombers; and it is sick and exhausted by twenty years of bloodletting. Though all the Vietnamese are a doggedly independent people who have been resisting foreign domination for more than a thousand years, our own actions have forced them into dependence on China and the Soviet Union. It is not a condition of their own choosing. Furthermore, the Soviets themselves have made it clear that they would not be displeased to see China frustrated in Southeast Asia. Finally, every recent visitor to Hanoi reports that the North Vietnamese still retain a friendly feeling for Americans as a whole. Under the circumstances, it is likely that Hanoi would accept our offer of aid and friendship. At any rate, it is worth a try.

George Williams
Houston, Texas

Kauffmann, *from page 20*

perennial worries of the clown. His father's early marital trouble is a different, terrible story.)

He does well in two regards. He shows the evolution both of his father's ambitions and his changes in style – from knockabout clown to comic commentator. And he underscores the sheer theatrical instinct that enabled Bert Lahr to recognize quality even in the strange. When the comedian read the screenplay of *The Wizard of Oz*, a relatively daring undertaking in its day, he thought it was beautiful and wanted to do it. Much more extraordinary, when he read *Waiting for Godot* – long before the critics had kosherized Beckett – he responded with a fine performer's instincts. The author records a telephone conversation in which Bert

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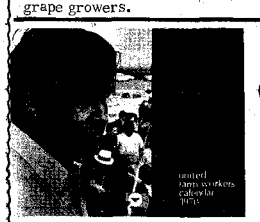

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Lahr speaks to his agent after reading *Godot* and says: "It's not like anything that's been done . . . Yes, but it's funny . . . I know, Lester, I know it's supposed to be tragic, but there are lots of gags . . . I'm not sure, but the writer's no phony. How many weeks do you think I could get with it?"

Affection, information, color – the book has plenty of them. Nevertheless, the reader has to fight to finish it because it is so very badly written. The net impression is that the author is afraid of the English language, is sweating clammily as he wrestles with it, and loses. There is neither space nor reason to document the struggle completely, but here are some fair samples.

Stuff-and-stuffing. On the day of Bert Lahr's birth, his father goes up on the roof to read his newspaper. "Jacob felt comfortable in the summer air. To the east was the river, muddy and strangely turbulent . . ." Etc.

Corn. "[DeSylva] combined the discipline of a writer with a sense of phrase and romance that made his songs as scintillating as the decade in which they were written." Or: "To the world, [Lahr] was a success; privately, the specter of failure haunted him."

Malapropisms. "Ziegfeld was cut from a more cosmopolitan mold." ("Cast in" a mold, perhaps?) When Mrs. Lahr calls up to her husband's dressing-room: "A falsetto voice echoes up the stairwell." (A "female" voice?)

Wretched writing. Just one sample out of dozens. "Later, smaller-scale revues . . . found admiring audiences on Broadway by offering not only more acerbic satire, but also an economic format that counterbalanced spiraling Broadway costs." Aside from the fact that spirals can go either up or down, this sentence says that audiences admired these new shows not only because the satire was harsher but because producers invested less money in them.

There are also grammatical and (numerous) typographical errors. In his acknowledgments, the author thanks his publishing-house's president, editor, and copy-editor. What for?

In the rather special field of filial theater-biography, *Notes* is not remotely as accomplished a piece of work as Daphne du Maurier's *Gerald* or Frances Donaldson's *Freddy* (the life of Frederick Lonsdale). But if the reader grits his teeth and bears with John Lahr's barbarisms and banalities, the boisterous, sad warmth of Bert Lahr will come through.

Personals

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100,000 signed this Declaration during the JOHNSON Administration.
NIXON is allowing death and destruction to continue and to increase.
Pressure and action against the war are needed.

Individuals Against the Crime of Silence

A Declaration To Our Fellow Citizens Of The United States, To The Peoples Of The World, And To Future Generations:

1 We are appalled and angered by the conduct of our country in Vietnam.

2 In the name of liberty, we have unleashed the awesome arsenal of the greatest military power in the world upon a small agricultural nation, killing, burning and mutilating its people. In the name of peace, we are creating a desert. In the name of security, we are inviting world conflagration.

3 We, the signers of this declaration, believe this war to be immoral. We believe it to be illegal. We must oppose it.

4 At Nuremberg, after World War II, we tried, convicted and executed men for the crime of OBEYING their government, when that government demanded of them crimes against humanity. Millions more, who were not tried, were still guilty of THE CRIME OF SILENCE.

5 We have a commitment to the laws and principles we carefully forged in the AMERICAN CONSTITUTION, at the NUREMBERG TRIALS, and in the UNITED NATIONS CHARTER. And our own deep democratic traditions and our dedication to the ideal of human decency among men demand that we speak out.

We Therefore wish to declare our names to the office of the Secretary General of the United Nations, both as permanent witness to our opposition to the war in Vietnam and as a demonstration that the conscience of America is not dead.

On September 23, 1965, a Memorandum of Law was incorporated in the Congressional Record of the 89th Congress of the United States of America, in which leading American attorneys, after careful analysis of our position and actions in the Vietnam War, came to the conclusion that the U.S. is violating the following accords: The Charter of the United Nations, The Geneva Accords of 1954, the United States Constitution.

To Protest—To Object—To Dissent has long been an American tradition. The following are a few among the many who have signed this declaration to be on permanent record.

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I wish to sign my name to the above Declaration to the United Nations and want to go on record with this Declaration of the Individuals Against the Crime of Silence.

signature _____
For clarity, also print your name after your signature

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Sign, complete and mail to P.O. Box 69960, Los Angeles, Calif. 90069. The office of the Individuals Against the Crime of Silence will then forward the information to the United Nations.
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The strength of our numbers will regularly and effectively be made known. Your signature does have power.

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